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G E R M A N Y

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME I



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WILLIAM HEINEMANN

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.



THE "Germany" of Heinrich Heine is a work of which no one can be ignorant who seeks sound, or even superficial, knowledge of modern literature. It is from beginning to end replete with deep and original thoughts of the kind from which entire essays or books can be made: and these are, in most instances, thrown off in such brief and brilliant form, that it would almost seem as if the author thought more of amusing than instructing, or—which is indeed, in most instances, more usual—as if he supposed the reader to be, in fact, as well informed, as shrewd of apprehension, and as cleverly genial as himself. Such writers, who are, however, of the rarest, are invaluable as educators, or as trainers of thought and style. He who is treated by an author as an equal will, if he studies that man's works thoroughly, end by developing more or less his style, or art-nature. In this respect I believe

grandly sustained and carried to a triumphant conclusion. The work is a braid of many threads of which this is not the least brilliant. This led Heim to the remarkable the loudly uttered and earnest prophecy bidding the French beware the day when Germany should be united. But to point out all the profound and valuable and beautiful thoughts which occur in this great summary of the causes of the development of German intellect in its various phases would be like commenting on every item in an index of the work. I may summarise its merits by saying that one cannot conceive of any really intelligent and liberal or *truly* strong-minded thinker who would not be fascinated with this book.

And this brings us to the other side of the shield that is to the defects and errors which such a thinker or reader can readily detect and reject as a skilled miner throws away from his gold the dross which would induce a more ignorant person to reject the whole. But to find the gold one must *understand* the quartz which encrusts the oxide of iron and the glittering pyrites which conceals and deludes, pay to a certain degree he must also appreciate their value as accompaniments of the precious metal. This is to say the truly skilled seeker who most thoroughly masters a subject is in all cases the

one who understands its faults. And for this reason I have, while leaving it to the reader himself in great measure to detect the golden flakes, *don't let lumière out en noir*, pointed out; not without much serious reflection and care, and inspired deeply with a desire to present Heine as he was in very sincere truth: the strange and sad failings and sins of commission and omission which run all through his works, like the rugged lumps and vacant hollows in a piece of stalagmite. The first of these faults is a manifest inability to accord or co-ordinate error and merit in others, so as to give us a fair and harmonious idea of the *total* of any author described. This is the result of two causes, one of which was an insatiable petty, small-feminine love of gossip and scandal,¹ in spite of the true principle which he announced, that it is by the works of a man, and not his life, that he should be judged. The second was an almost boyish susceptibility, which made him for the moment altogether enthusiastic, either with admiration or anger, at a character or a

¹ This has grown enormously of late years. I recently found in one of the best known minor literary magazines two lives of a distinguished English poet, in which his works. It would seem as if the general tendency of an author's work is rapidly becoming a mere prelude to his hanging his biography.

book, without reflecting on the other side. And yet again with these defects was often intertwined an equally childish jealousy, or merely personal dislike, which he had not the good sense to control or conceal, the result being that certain characters—as, for instance, August Wilhelm von Schlegel—are so presented that we know not whether they are drivelling idiots or debauchees with hardly a mind, or men of genius and leaders of great intellectual movements, as the Schlegels certainly were, of which Heine indeed informs us in certain places, but gives much less stress to it than he does to more disreputable chambermaids' gossip regarding them. This is not invariably the case, but it occurs so often that the reader would do well to bear it in mind.

• Heine had lived in touch or time with many eminent men, with the very common result that he thought too much of some and too little of others—as is generally the result of personal acquaintance, attraction, or antipathies. He had not the vast impartiality of a Goethe in this respect. Hence he neglects, or is unable to invariably set forth, the real influence or action of certain authors in their time, though he does it well with others. But the two great faults of his "Gazette" are these. Heine wished to be

regarded as the first person who made German literature and thought known to France, which was to him really the world. England he ignored, because he had no hold on or fame in it. But Madame de Stael, aided by her early teacher, August W. Von Schlegel, had done the one well in *L'Allemagne*, and Victor Cousin had elaborately, and in fact admirably, achieved the other; therefore Heine treats these authors, especially the two men, with an unconcealed hatred which is simply as violent as it is more generally silly, his object being to decry them, out of mere envy. For I do not believe that Heine had at heart a poor opinion of their works: he was far too intelligent and well read not to appreciate them.

It may be indicated as a great defect that our author devotes such disproportionate space to the folk-lore of goblins and fairies, great as its influence in Germany has been; and that even in these chapters, as in *Elementary Spirits*, he wanders widely from the subject, while in other places he gives many pages to spiteful gossip over petty people, like Raupach (as it were to prove at length that they are not worth noticing), while he quite omits to mention, or else to illustrate in any way whatever, many very famous men. Whether it arose from impatience of labour or research, it

is certain that in illustration by citation Heine was very unfortunate, that of Uhland being anything but fairly representative, while the old Danish ballads and legends, to which many pages are given, are somewhat out of place and badly selected.

The reader who is not familiar with the subject must again be on his guard as to Heine's really arrogant assertion that he was the first to make known to the people the systems of the great German philosophers. He was a fairly accomplished "metaphysician" for his time, but he did not at all perceive what was common to all schools, and he believed, like all Germans of his day—departing from *ex ipso crypto sum*—that somewhere there must exist some kind of absolute philosophy founded on *theism* or "spirit." The grain which he boasts of having taken from the storehouse of German philosophy, and cleaned for the people, turns out too often to be mere "chaff." He does not give, in fact, intelligently and succinctly, as many before him had done, the *method* of any philosopher; and in several cases this is done so imperfectly as to almost induce a suspicion that he had not clearly understood them. This is certainly the case as regards the methods of Kant, Fichte, and Schelling, while as to Hegel he really tells us nothing at all. I do not think

that I err when I say that for a reader who is interested in the subject, it is easier to understand these writers from their own pages than from Heine's eccentric, though brilliant and genial, mingling of metaphysics, mockery and memoir. He did *not* explain German metaphysics well or clearly to the multitude; he simply made its vast influence understood by entertaining and personal gossip, interspersing so much that was vivacious, original, and true with a great deal that was frivolous and sometimes false, as to produce the greatest masterpiece of *melange* known in literature. Rabelais had shown how genius and learning could be allied to illustrate broad humour and life, and Sterne how all this could be blended with sentiment. Heine tried the bolder and broader experiment of combining these elements with serious discussion of literature and politics. Sometimes his stream runs very shallow as regards sound knowledge of his subject; great dry rocks of ancient facts appear which he could not rise to or cover: but he then makes all the greater babbling and bubbling, and hurries along to some more congenial and softer, perhaps muddier, spot, where he presently hollows out a tolerably deep eddy, and whirls round and round exultingly, springing, like one of the dancing dervishes whom he cites, into a fancied conception

of the absolute, but always bright and brilliant, sparkling and amusing.

Heine posed as a deeply read man on most subjects—as he should have been, to treat so many properly: but it would amaze not a few of his devoted admirers to know how slender was his erudition, even where he tried to appear learned. This is apparent in several places in “Germany,” which occasionally presents pitiful illustration of a man’s endeavouring to carry on a great business with a small capital. And yet he never comes to actual bankruptcy: in fact, with many he has illimitable credit for solid wisdom, which credit is in the end to him as good as capital. True, he is often hard put to it to meet his notes, or make good his vaunts; very often he stands at his own door “barking” about the superiority of his ready-made clothes for the soul; but in the end he attracts a crowd. And then the coats or waistcoats, if not of the very best wool or make, are still so beautifully dyed, and have such brilliant and original buttons!—nay, there is much jewellery in the way of studs and pins generously thrown in *gratis*, so that the customers depart well satisfied. Nor can it be said that they do not get their money’s worth, or even very great bargains—all that can be said is that always in life people should know exactly what it is

that they are buying. Or, again, Heine was like a large and really valuable diamond, full of flaws of which he was conscious and knew that others noticed them, and yet he wished to be valued as if perfect. All of which he has said of himself as clearly and far more bitterly than I have done.

This flaw in the diamond is Heine's caprice, instability, and self-will. There are women who expect to have all their follies, tricks, and faults forgiven with a smile, because "it is pretty Fanny's way," and who fancy that all their little rebellious whims or even evil manners and deeds must be passed over because they are so engaging. It is a pity when such women are really gifted and clever, for the result is to common sense a painful paradox. It cannot be denied that Heine had this feminine weakness, that he was over-conscious of his own genius and marvellous brilliancy and versatility, and so conducted himself habitually like a spoiled belle with a great deal of the *femme nerveuse* in her nature. In Germany the youthful belle of the *Reisbühler* occasionally seems to be *un peu sar le retour*, showing traces of *la vieille coquette*, when her *minauderies* are terrible. And yet she is as clever and amusing as ever!

We have the feeling as regards Heine that if any one had said to him, "Unstable as water, thou

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shalt not excel," he would have immediately retorted, "Ah! but you can't get along without water, you know." Which is unanswerable, but not an answer, neither is it wisdom, and yet Heine set himself up for a sage of sages and a leader in politics. Sometimes this king's jester disguises himself as a wise man and sits in the assembly, and for a time amazes and amuses all present by his marvellous genius; but anon there is heard a tinkling of morrice-bells, and there is seen a flash of red ribbons and tinsel—some one twitches away the philosopher's robe, when out skips the mad rogue with a roar of laughter and a screaming joke, in naught ashamed, and in a few minutes reappears *incognito* in another guise. "And yet he *did* speak wisely for a time; yes, very beautifully, and oh, so gaily!" says some one regretfully. And so say we all of us. He spoke more sagely than our sages do, and yet he was a jester all the while. In justice to "Germany" it must be said that in it, for the greater portion, our author sits well-behaved in the council and speaks admirably.

I would call the reader's attention to the fact that, until the appearance of this present work, there was not in existence a *complete* edition of Heine's "Germany." The author professed to have written it in French as well as in German, but

the aid of a secretary or of an assistant translator, who was *not* Heine, is so marked and manifest in many places as to be beyond all question. There are often entire pages, or several pages together, to be found in the German which are wanting in the French version, but occasionally it is *vice versa*, while differences of mere sentences or expressions are very numerous. Heine expresses in the beginning the most stony-hearted independence as to all men's opinions, but he is generally very careful to omit things which would offend his French readers, as, for instance, by leaving out the word "Catholic" wherever it is possible. Where there are additions in the French text, the German editor translates them into *German* and gives them in a footnote; but he omits several important passages, and rarely takes account of minor expressions. As I presume that English and Americans who care to read Heine, can understand French, I have thought it better to give these variations in the original. I do not exaggerate when I say that the labour of thus collating, comparing, and selecting every word in the two versions has been, not twice but perhaps three as great as simple translation from one language would have been: in saying which I judge by the work which I devoted to the *Le sabbat* and *Florentine Nights*. In a few cases, where the

French version presented unmistakable originality and beauty of expression superior to the German, I have availed myself of it; but in all cases, every word, from the beginning, has been based on frequent reading or study of the latter, and I therefore trust that critics and readers will be lenient, considering the difficulty which this double task involved.

The difficulty in translating Heine, of which we hear so much, does not consist by any means entirely in rendering his exquisite grace, his inimitable sprightliness and *tour de force*—it very often lies in *not* following his intolerable tautology of words, iteration of ideas, or of commonplace conceptions, his brusque French-German terms, or common slang, and in occasionally feeling obliged to put some kind of expressive termination to a sentence which, when reduced to strict English sense, and deprived of its *et cetera*, is only a winding corridor which leads to nothing. There are certain readers with whom the untranslatable, even if trash, passes for the inimitable; but as a rule, perhaps without exception, the author who is really untranslatable is not worth a version. Heine is by no means deficient in passages which, if they were no better written in English than they are in German, would be condemned in the humblest writer. Our author was by no means

himself always an accurate or conscientious translator, as I have shown by the very curious Latin original of a tale which he strangely perverted, to make a point.

It is usual to extol the French version as a miracle of translation. But there are pages together in it in which we find serious and manifestly careless or reckless omissions of ideas, more frequently those of important words, or petty departures from the spirit of the original in almost every sentence—as the reader may easily verify from the footnotes in this volume. It is not possible—dis-counting the natural grace of the French language itself, even gold-leaf being always gold-leaf wherever applied—to conceive of any English translation being made so inaccurately by anybody who understood the original and dared to publish. It has been said that Heine “threw himself into himself” in making this French version; if so, it is very certain that, like the juggler who performed a similar flip-flap, he came out Somebody Else.

I trust that the reader will accept the footnotes, whether of explanation or comment, which I have given with kindly feeling. Where I think that the author has in any way erred, either as to books, data, or character, I have taken the liberty of commenting, to save certain readers from

being misled. Many will not require such suggestions; I beg them not to regard my remarks as uncalled for, and to reflect on those who may desire some benefit from them. Such as they are, these notes have cost me much reading and search, which I pray may be put down to my good account. As regards serious effort to translate carefully and clearly, retaining as well as I could the spirit of a writer with whom I have long been familiar, and who himself expressed gratification at the publication of my translation of his *Reisebilder*, I can only say that I have taken a degree of pains which I never before devoted to any similar work.

CHARLES GODFREY LELAND.

GENEVA, July 1891.

THE GERMAN PUBLISHER'S PREFACE.

THE review of German intellectual effort in the past, which Henry Heine published in French under the general title *De l'Allemagne*, is now brought for the first time before the German public as a comprehensive whole. The author had in the prefaces to different parts of his works fully explained the reasons which forced him to print it in Germany in fragments. These were of an extremely foreign, yet none the less compulsive, character. On the one hand, he was obliged to hasten his work in setting before the public of his native land the articles written in French for French journals, lest some unauthorised third person should profit by a translation of them. At that time there was not only no international treaty or copyright law which secured to an author the privilege of possession and transla-

tion of his own works when written in a foreign country, but an edict of the German Confederacy of the 5th of April 1832 had declared that no printed piece, in German, of a political character, of less than twenty sheets, could be admitted to, or sold in any of its states, without previous permission from the government. And again, the hindrances of the censorship assumed every year a more threatening character, until from Wolfgang Menzel's denunciation of that edict of December 10, 1835, it resulted that in connection with the writings of the so-called Young Germany, all the works of Henry Heine were put *Interdictum* *Bona*, under suspicion and prohibition and even caused a total suspension of the sale of all the books issued by his publisher in several German cities. A work of Heine's with the general title *Über Deutschland*, or "On Germany," was at any rate previously suppressed by the censorship and the reactionary government; it being a very mixed collection of philosophical, artistic, and literary-historical, or novelistic fragments, as contained in the *Salon*. It is well known that Heine found these portions of his work published in fragments, so vilely docked and disfigured by the scissors of the censor, that their very meaning had vanished. If the reader will compare this present work—enlarged from the original manuscript and the

French edition—even in the most superficial manner with the earlier German editions, he will at once perceive that Heine, in spite of the continually increasing difficulties of his situation as an author, never once in his “Germany” did aught unworthy of him, or sacrificed *the ultra* to remunerative concessions.

“I conjure you,” he wrote to his friend Heinrich Laube, during the time of denunciations of Menzel (on the 25th of November 1835), “by all you hold dear, either to take no part in the war which Young Germany is now waging, or at least to observe a very furtive neutrality, and do not try this youth with a single word. Draw a line clearly between political and religious questions. In the former you may make as many concessions as you please, for political forms of state and of government are only a mean—monarchy or republic, democratic or aristocratic institutions are of equal consequence, so long as the idea of life itself is not determined. In due time will come the question whether we are to have a monarchy or republic, or aristocracy, or even absolutism; for which latter I have no great disinclination. By such a distinction in the question, one can also allay the scruples of the censorship, for discussions of religious and moral principles cannot be silenced without annulling the whole *Protestant*

freedom of thought and of judgment; and here we meet with the approval of the Philistines. You understand me when I say the religious and moral principle; though both are, like pork and pig's meat, one and the same. Morality is only religion passed into manners; and if the religion of the past is rotten, then morals stink. We need a sound religion, so that manners may be sounder and better based than they are at present when their only substratum is unbelief and worn-out hypocrisy."

I have retained almost unchanged the arrangement of the French edition of the book "On Germany," made by Heine himself. I have only left to the last division of the third book of the "Romantic School" (which formed the preface of the French issue), the place which it occupied in the previous German edition. And I have, moreover, for internal and external reasons, allotted to the Confessions, which formed the conclusion of the latest French edition, another position. The seventh volume of this complete series would have been, as regards size, out of all proportion to the other volumes, had I included in it the Confessions; but what was of still more importance was the inner reason that this essay, which as regards the time of composition and its subject-matter, forms the conclusion of the literary activity

of the poet, seemed to be most appropriately placed in the last volume of the prose writings. The omissions and softening of certain sentences to which Heine refers in the preface to the French edition, are of too important a nature to require a simultaneous or preparatory reading of the Confessions.

The essay, "On the History of Religion and Philosophy in Germany," which first appeared in French under the title *De l'Histoire de l'esprit*, in the *Revue de Paris*, in the *Revue de Paris*, March 1, November 15, and December 15, 1834, appeared soon after, in the beginning of 1835, in a German translation as the second volume of the *Schober*, but in such an absolutely mangled and abbreviated form, that the patriotic aim of the work, if nothing else, was entirely lost. In the second edition, in the year 1852, the most important omissions were made good by the author from the French version, because Heine believed that the first manuscript of the work, which he had sent to Hamburg, had there perished in the great fire of 1842. But it was subsequently found among certain papers of the publisher's which had been rescued, and has been used in preparing and enlarging this present edition.

AUTHORS' PREFACE

TO THE FRIENDS OF THE BOOK
ON GERMANY

The limited space of a preface will not permit me to go ~~on~~ ^{into} detail at all which I would gladly commend to the public. I have therefore preferred to present these confessions of the author as a whole in the last part of my work, and I even confess that my dear reader would do well to begin his reading at this latter end.¹ That is serious advice. Those who may by chance be acquainted with the first edition of my book, will see at the first glance that the new one contains more than half as much, and that a great number of passages were cut out of it, so that this book "On Germany" has an altogether different appearance, and is not indeed the same book.

In several new parts which I have added,

¹ Vide the foregoing preface by the German ⁵ publisher.

especially in those which form the whole second half, I have undertaken to unveil to the view of the French public the most secret and characteristic treasures of the German people, and in which, as I may say, and its dreary, yet at the same time strong and vigorous character is set forth. I here speak of those traditions and tales which live in the language of the lower classes, the best and most original of which I have never before noticed. I have before me a story that one of those which I myself once heard by a fire-side, and which I have since more than a hundred times repeated to my friends, but the story, in my recollection, which the delirious dance of the fire of twigs enlivened the face of the narrator, and the beating of the hearts of the hearers who listened in happy silence, I could not render, and these rather well-nigh barbaric stories deprived of that loss their most attractive wondrous secret charm.

I refrain from making any remarks relative to the expurgations or omissions which my book has experienced. By so doing I have at least escaped the danger of displaying any want of tact. I have suppressed bitter sallies which were once inspired by youthful and unjust ill-feeling, and I have done the same with the flattering and complimentary words of dedication, which could

[illegible]

The German publisher then cites the dedication of the first edition of *Prayer in Russian*, which is, however, of no special interest, and which by its assertion directly contradicts the point of Hume's *Anti-Tradition*.

have since their return from the East been wedded themselves, and become the most undaunted marrying men, or *épouseurs*, in the world, and they wear boots.¹ Most of these men now live in clover, some of them are brand-new millionaires, and more than one have risen to the most honourable and profitable positions—people travel quickly now by railways. These former apostles, who dreamed of a golden age for all mankind, have contented themselves with carrying on the age of silver, or the rule of the money-god (*dieu argent*), who is the father and mother of all, and who is all—perhaps the same deity of whom it was preached, “All is in him, nothing is out of him, nothing is without him.” But this is not the God which the writer of these lines adores. Indeed, I prefer to him the poor God

¹ *Und sie tragen Stiefel*. *Stiefel* means a boot; also, poeasely, a portion. They have gone in for booty and beauty is a rough rendering. The allusions here are all to the famous socialistic effort or community, established about 1830 in Paris by Proudhon and others, which is referred to in Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*. Singularly enough, many who embarked in this wild scheme afterwards became eminent as statesmen and promoters of railways, and other great speculations. Rylance, in “*Le Paturon*,” and in an amusing sketch of this society, gives a picture in which a neophyte with an aureole round his head is represented as cleaning the boots of the brethren. It was a part of the great after-movement of the first revolution which produced Fourier, Cabot, and many more world-betterers of the old but reform kind. *†* *Triapulator*

of Nazareth, who had not a farthing, and who was the protector of beggars and sufferers. As I belong somewhat to this latter class, I should be guilty of great folly if I paid old-fashioned compliments to the proud victors and fortunate ones of the age, who can get on perfectly well without them.

I cannot too earnestly urge the fact that I had not the intention to give a perfect picture of Germany. I only wished to here and there lift the veil which covers this mysterious land, and if the reader has not seen all, or but a small portion, he will at least have seen that little as it truly is, while he will be scantily or not at all informed by books in which the perfection of intelligence is promised, and which give nothing but a dry and fruitless, though it may be an accurate and conscientious, enumeration of facts.

As regards German literature, my book contains only the history of the so-called Romantic school; and as I had determined to give the most accurate information as to the writers who belong to it, I was of course obliged to speak more in detail of them than of German poets of a higher rank, who were gifted with far greater talent, yet had no place therein. I have even passed over in silence several great authors who are sometimes included among its allies, but who in my opinion

have naught to do with it ; as, for instance, Henry von Kleist, and my late friend, Karl Immermann, and Christian Grabbe, all three men of great genius. They are indeed, giants when compared to those writers of the Romantic school of whom I have spoken in my book ; and they can without contradiction, be regarded as the most distinguished poets of the Goethe period. Certainly no one of them has been since then surpassed, though the German theatre has at present two poets of rarest merit in the person of my friend Friedrich Hebbel, the composer of "Judith," and Alfred Meissner author of the tragedy known as "The Wife of Uras." The first is allied in spirit to Kleist and Grabbe, and a trifling critic of the day would not be capable of appreciating his genius ; the other, Alfred Meissner, is much more accessible, his public is greater, he has a soul inspired with passion, and I am convinced that he will yet attain to the popularity of Frederic Schiller, whose presumptive heir he is at present in Germany.

I have remarked that I could not mention in my book several of our great German poets because they did not fit into the frames of my gallery, which was devoted entirely to pictures of the Romantic school. Among the great men are several lyrical poets who, owing to the direction which their souls steeped in romance have taken,

seem to be allied to it. Of these are four whose talents approach those of our greatest poets. They are my late friend, Adelbert von Chamisso, who was French by birth, and the admirable Friedrich Rückert, whose imagination is of a luxuriant oriental fulness; the third is my friend, Count Auersperg, known by the name of Anastasius Grün, a lyric poet, rich to excess in imagery, and gifted with a great and noble soul; finally, the fourth, but recently appearing on the scene, is Ferdinand Freiligrath, a talent of the first class, a powerful colourist, and gifted with great originality.

In another work, which I hope to finish, I shall be able to speak in detail of many German writers who were my contemporaries, and who are not mentioned in my book "On Germany." Therein I shall amply fill the empty places in this last work; and I pledge my word that neither the public nor the authors, with whom I at present have not occupied myself, will find aught missing which they have expected.

HEINRICH HEINE.

PARIS, *January 25, 1855* •

EXTRACT FROM THE FIRST EDITION OF
THE FRENCH VERSION

IN the first three parts of this book I have spoken rather in detail of the wars between religion and philosophy in Germany, and it was my task to clearly set forth that spiritual revolution in my native land, regarding which Madame de Stael circulated so many errors. I candidly confess that I always had this book of the grandmother of the Doctrinaires before my eyes, and it was with a view to rectification that I gave mine the same title, "On Germany."

HEINRICH HEINE.

PARIS, April 8. 1835

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.



I MUST beg the German reader to especially observe that these pages were originally written for a French publication, the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, and for a special and then timely object. For they belong to a survey of German genius of the past, a part of which I had previously placed before the French public, and which had also appeared in German, as contributions to the history of the more recent literature of Germany. The demands of the periodical press, errors in its management, the want of requisite books and references, inadequate French aid, a law recently promulgated in Germany regarding foreign works which reached me alone, and similar hindrances, prevented me from publishing the different portions of the survey in question in chronological order, and under a common title. Therefore the

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XXXX *PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.*

present work, in spite of its apparent internal unity and its external exclusiveness, is only the fragment of a greater whole.

I greet my home with a most friendly greeting.

HEINRICH HEINE

Written in Paris, December 1834.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

WHEN the first edition of this work appeared, and I examined a copy, I was not a little shocked at the mutilations and errors which appeared everywhere in it. Here an adjective was wanting, there a phrase in parenthesis, while whole passages were omitted without reference to the context, so that not only the general meaning but very often all meaning whatever, had disappeared. It was far more the fear of Cæsar than that of God which had guided the hand of the censor in these excisions, for while everything which was politically suspicious had been carefully expunged, the most serious and doubtful references to religion had been passed over. The result was, that the real tendency or intent of the book, which was patriotic and democratic, was lost, and there glared at me in its place a grim, strange

spirit, suggestive of scholastic theologic cuffling and pummelling, such as is utterly repugnant to my humane and tolerant disposition.

I flattered myself that I could make it all right and fill up the gaps in a second edition; but no such restoration is now possible, because the manuscript perished in the house of my publisher, in the great fire of Hamburg.¹ My memory is too weak to aid me in the work, neither were my eyes in a fit condition for it. I therefore avail myself of the French version, which was published before the German, to translate and replace the more important missing portions.

One of these passages which appeared in innumerable French newspapers, which was much discussed, and even cited by one of the greatest statesmen of France, Count Molé, in the Chamber of Deputies last year, is given at the end of this new edition, and it may show what relation it has to the depreciation and degradation of Germany, of which I, according to certain honourable men, have been guilty as to a foreign country. If I ever in my anger expressed myself plainly as to the old official Germany, the mouldy country of the Philistines (which has, however, produced

¹ It has been already mentioned that it was subsequently found and used for the edition from which this translation is taken.

no Goliath, and no one great man) then it was so twisted and turned as to make it appear as if I meant the real Germany itself, the great mysterious, or, as it were, the anonymous Germany of the German people—those sleeping sovereigns with whose sceptre and crown the monkeys are playing. Such insinuations were all the more easily conveyed, because during a long time any true expression of my opinions was simply impossible, especially during the decree of the Bundestag against "Young Germany," which was specially directed against me, and which put me into an exceptionally strained position, such as was unprecedented in the annals of oppression of the press. And when I at a later time succeeded in getting rid somewhat of the muzzle my thoughts were still clogged.

This book is a fragment, and a fragment it shall remain. I declare on my honour that I should be pleased if I could leave it unpublished. Since it appeared my views have changed as regards many things, especially religious matters, and much which I then asserted is totally at variance with my present opinions. But the arrow when it has left the bow-string no longer belongs to the archer, and the word is no longer in the control of him who spoke it when it has left his lips, and still more when it has been

multiplied by the press. And there are strict external claims upon me which I cannot control, and obligations which I must fulfil, as regards publishing this work, which render it impossible for me to suppress it. I could, indeed, as many authors would in such circumstances have done, take refuge in softening expressions and cooling phrases, but I hate from my very soul ambiguous words, hypocritical flowers of speech, cowardly fig-leaves.¹ But under all circumstances there always remains to an honourable man the inalienable right to candidly confess his faults: and I will here exercise the right without diffid^{er}nce. I here candidly confess that everything in this book which relates to the great question of God is as false as it was foolish.² And just as irrational as false is the assertion which I repeated in the school, that Deism was theoretically decomp^{os}ed and must for the future drag out a feeble life in the world of mere shams. No, it is not true that the critic of reason, which has conquered the fanatical advocates of proofs of the existence of God, as we have known them since Anselm of Canterbury, has also put an end to the existence

¹ *Der feine Feigenblätter.* In England, at the time of Queen Elizabeth, the term *fig-leaf*, from the Italian, was equivalent to the reproach of cowardice. It still survives in the saying, "I will fight for him," or "I would not give a fig for it."

² *Unbesonnen.* Needless, rash, foolish without reflection.

of God Himself. The Doctor lives, lives its most lively life; it is not dead, not half-dead, has it been killed by the last German philosophy. This subweb Berlin did not want to cut a dog out of the kitchen, or let a cat scratch a God. I have personally experienced how little danger there is in the kitchen; they are always killing somebody, but they never always kill. The door-keeper of the Hegelian school, the grim Ruge, once declared stiff and strong, or rather strong and stiff, that he had known I was dead in the Halle Annual, yet all the while I was running about the Boulevards of Paris fresh and sound, and more immortal than ever. Poor, valiant Ruge! he himself could not refrain from the heartiest laughter when I confessed to him, here in Paris, that I had never seen the terrible death-dealing sheets of the Halle Annual; and my rosy cheeks, as well as the excellent appetite with which I swallowed oysters, convinced him how little of a corpse there was in me. In fact, I was then still healthy and fat, yes, in the zenith of my fatness, and was as haughty as King Nebuchadnezzar before his fall.

Ah! a few years later there came a bodily and spiritual change. How often since then have I reflected on the history of that Babylonian monarch who held himself to be God, but

was cast down from the height of his delusion, crept like a beast in the field and ate grass—it may have been salad¹. In the great and glorious Book of Daniel lies the legend which I commend not only to the excellent Ruge but also to my still more deeply deluded friends Marx, yet even unto Messieurs Feuerbach, Daumer, Bruno Bauer, Hengstenberg, and whatever else they may be called, these godless self-gods—for their edifying consideration. But there are also in the Bible many beautiful and remarkable narratives well worth their attention: is for instance in the very beginning that of the forbidden tree in Paradise and the serpent that little private professor who six thousand years before Hegel was born taught the whole Hegelian philosophy. This blind stock-
ing without feet showed very shrewdly how the Absolute consisted of an identity of being and knowing² how man became God through knowledge or which is the same thing how God in man first attained to knowledge of Himself. However the formula is not so clear and intelligible as the commonly received one of the

¹ *Donnerstags-Salat* is an anagram of the perfectly explicit full value of the religious conviction. — *Donnerstag*

Samuel Butler has introduced the term technology first developed by Kant amongst his followers.

came to me. Pious souls seemed to be yearning for me to reveal some miracle to them; they would fain know whether I did not, like Paul, see a light on the way to Damascus, or whether I had not, like Balaam the son of Beor, been riding a stubborn ass, who suddenly opened his mouth and began to speak like a man? No, ye pious, confiding souls, I never travelled to Damascus; I know nothing whatever about Damascus, save that the Jews who lived there were lately accused of eating old Capucines. Nor would I perhaps have known the name of the city, had I not read the *Chronicles of King Solomon*, in which the general's chamber of the king of Israel beloveth to a tower which looketh forth towards Damascus. Nor did I ever see an ass that is, a four-footed one who spoke like a man, though I have met men enough who whenever they opened their mouths, spoke like asses. In fact, it was neither a vision, nor a scraphic rapture, nor a voice from heaven, or wonderful dream, or any such marvellous spiriting; and I only began to enlighten me entirely and soundly to reading an old simple book, as plain and modest in nature itself—as you, and quite as plain in its style, which

* *Writings of John Foxe*, a copy of it is in my library, which would be perfectly uninteresting in Pennsylvania if one were to speak of a wonderful point.

seems as week-day like and unpretending as the sun which warms us, or as the bread with which we are fed; a book which greets us with all the intimate confidence, the blessed affection, and kind glance of an old grandmother, who herself reads it every day with her dear, trembling lips, with the spectacles on her nose; and this book is, simply and briefly, the Bible. This is called with cause the Holy Scripture: he who has lost his God may find Him again in this book, and to him who has never known Him the breath of the divine word is wafted from it. The Jews, who are connoisseurs in costly things, knew very well what they were about when, in the conflagration of the Second Temple, they left the gold and silver vessels of sacrifice, the candelabras and lamps, and even the high-priest's breast-cloth, with its great jewels, to take care of themselves, and only rescued the Bible. This was the real treasure of the Temple, and it was not—God be praised!—a prey to the flames, or to Titus Vespasian, the evildoer who had such an evil end, as the Rabbis relate. A Jewish priest who lived during the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus at Jerusalem, and who was called Joshua ben Siras ben Eliezer, has expressed in *Meschalim*, a collection of gnomie sayings, the opinions of his time as to the Bible, and I will here cite his beautiful words. They

are sacerdotally solemn, and yet vigorous and refreshing as if they had but just ready been uttered, and are as follows:

"All of this is the Book of the Covenant made with the highest God, that is to say, the Law which Moses ordained for a treasure to the House of Jacob. From it wisdom has ever flown like unto the water of Pison when it is erect, and the water of Tigris when it runs over in the time of Spring. From it understanding has run like the Euphrates when it is swollen, and like Jordan in the harvest. From it virtue has shined like light, and like the water of the Nile at the ingathering of the harvest. He has never perished who learned it all, nor will he ever exist who can master all its wisdom, for its sense is deeper than any sea, and its word deeper than any abyss."

HEINRICH HEINE

•(Written in Paris in the month of July (Jan.) 1852.)

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GERMANY.

FIRST PART.—BOOK FIRST.

GERMANY TILL THE TIME OF LUTHER.

THE French believed of late years that they had attained to an understanding of Germany when they had learned something of our literature. Yet by this they have only raised themselves from a condition of utter ignorance to simple superficiality; for the products of our literature will remain for them silent flowers, and the whole spirit of German thought a barren repulsive riddle, so long as they are ignorant of the significance and meaning of religion and philosophy in Germany.

By imparting, as is my object, some explanatory information on this subject, I believe that I shall undertake a useful work. This is for me no easy task. Firstly, it is necessary to avoid a technology of which the French are utterly ignorant. And

yet I have not so deeply sounded the subtleties of theology or metaphysics as to be able to formulise them simply and briefly to suit the requirements of the French public. I shall therefore treat only of the great questions which are discussed in German divinity and worldly wisdom, and I shall always take into due consideration the limit of my own powers of explanation, and those of comprehension in the French reader.

Great German philosophers, who may perhaps by accident cast a glance over these pages, will probably shrug their shoulders at the scantily abridged fashion of all which I here present. But they will kindly observe that what little I say is clearly and significantly expressed, while their own works are indeed very fundamental—inmeasurably fundamental, very profound—stupendously profound, but just in the same proportion unintelligible. Of what use to the people are locked-up granaries if they have no key to them? The people hunger for knowledge, and thank me for the bit of spiritual truth which I honourably divide with them.

I do not think it is want of ability which restrains most German learned men from expressing themselves in a popular manner as to religion and philosophy. I believe it is a diffident fear of the results of their own thoughts, which they dare not put before the people. I have not this reserve :

I am not a learned man; I do not belong to the seven hundred sages of Germany. I stand with the great multitude before the gates of their wisdom, and if any truth slips through them and gets to me, that is enough. I write it nicely out on paper and hand it to the printer, who prints it, and then it belongs to all the world.

The religion in which we rejoice in Germany is Christianity. I shall therefore have to tell what Christianity is, how it became Roman Catholicism, how this passed over into Protestantism, and how from Protestantism proceeded German philosophy.¹

And since I shall begin by discussing religion, I beg beforehand that all pious souls shall not for goodness-sake worry themselves. Fear nothing, pious souls; no profane jests shall pain your ears. Such are, however, still useful in Germany, where it is necessary to restrain for a while the power of religion. For we are there as yet where you were before the Revolution, when Christianity was in inseparable alliance with the old régime. The one could not be disturbed so long as the other exerted an influence on the multitude. Voltaire had to let his sharp laughter be heard ere Sanson

¹ In the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, as well as in the later French editions, there are paraphrases of the foregoing introduction, but which are inferior to it; nor do they contain anything which is not virtually included in it.—*Translator*.

could let his axe fall. Yet the laughter like the axe, in reality proved nothing—they only worked practically. Voltaire could only wound the body of Christianity. All his jests drawn from Church history, all his witty sayings as to dogmatics and culture, on the Bible, the holiest book of mankind, on the Virgin Mary, the fairest flower of poetry, the whole dictionary of philosophic arrows which he shot freely against clergy and priests, only hurt the mortal body of Christianity, not its deeper spirit, not its immortal soul.

For Christianity is an idea, and as such indestructible and immortal, like every idea. But what is this idea?

It is just because this idea has not been clearly understood, and because externals have been mistaken for the reality, that there is as yet no history of Christianity. Two opposite parties write the history of the Church, and instantly contradict one another; but neither will ever distinctly express what that idea really is which forms the true centre of Christianity, and which strives to reveal itself in its symbolism, its dogma, as in its culture.¹ Neither Baronius, the Catholic cardinal, nor the Protestant court-councillor, Schrock, has

¹ *Kultus*. The true meaning of this disputed word is here the peculiar form which national spirit or character assume in action, including its social, literary, and other development. — *Translator*.

revealed to us what that idea really was. And though you should turn over all the folios of the acts of the councils, the Assemanic code of liturgies, and the whole *Historia Ecclesiastica* of Sacarelli, you would never learn from them what the idea of Christianity really was. What do you see, then, in the histories of the Oriental and Western Churches? Nothing but dogmatic subtleties, in which, in the one, the old Greek sophistry shows itself again, while in the Western you find only disputes on points of discipline concerning ecclesiastical interests, in which the old Roman legal casuistry and arts of government are revived with new formulas and means of enforcing them. In fact, just as people fought in Constantinople over the *Logos*, so they fought in Rome over the relative claims of secular and ecclesiastical power; and as they made feuds there as to *δμουσιος*, so they quarrelled here concerning investiture. But the Byzantine questions, Whether the *Logos* was *δμουσιος* to God the Father?—whether the Virgin Mary was one giving birth to God or man?—whether Christ, wanting food, hungered, or only felt hungry because he wished to do so?—all these questions had in the background mere court intrigues, whose settlement depended on what was whispered and giggled in the chambers of the sacred palace—*sacri palatii*—as, for instance, whether Eudoxia should fall or Pulcheria? for

this lady hated Nestorius, who had betrayed her amorous intrigues, and that one hated Cyrillus, who protected Pulcheria. All concentrated at last on mere intrigues or gossip of women and eunuchs, and in a dogma some individual (and in the individual some party) was persecuted or protected. Just so it was in the West. Rome would rule. "When its legions fell, it sent dogmas into its provinces;" every quarrel as to religion had at the bottom Roman usurpation, the main question being to consolidate the power of the head Roman bishop. This ruler was very easy indeed as to many matters of faith, but belched fire and flame when the rights of the Church were attacked. He did not dispute much as to the persons in Christ, but a great deal over the consequences of the Isidore Decretals.¹ He centralised his power by canon law, appointment of bishops, degradation of princely power, monastic orders, celibacy, and so forth. But was all this Christianity? Does the reading of all this history reveal to us the idea of Christianity? What is this idea?

How this idea developed itself historically, and manifested itself in the world of things visible,

¹ There is a very amusing chapter in the *Chronicles of Rabelais* as to the immense importance attached to the holy decretals, which were virtually more revered than the Scriptures.—*Translator*.

may be easily perceived in the first century after Christ's birth, if we will, without prejudice, investigate the history of the Manichæans and Gnostics. Although the first have been declared heretics, and the last decried and damned by the Church, they still maintained an influence on the dogma; the art of the Church developed itself from their symbolism, and their manner of thinking penetrated the whole life of the Christian races. The Manichæans, as regards fundamental principles, are not very different from the Gnostics. The theory of two opposing, warring principles, good and bad, is common to both. The Manichæans derived this idea from the old Persian religion, in which Ormuzd, or Light, is opposed as an enemy to Ahriman, or Darkness. The true Gnostics placed more reliance on the pre-existence of the good principle, and explained the existence of the evil by emanation, by the generations of æons, who, the more remote they become from their origin, die the more degraded. According to Cerinthus, the creator of this our world was by no means the highest God, but only an emanation from him, one of the æons, the real demi-urgus, who gradually became deteriorated, and who now, as the bad principle, stands as an enemy to the good principle, or Logos, directly sprung from the highest God. This Gnostic view of the world is most ancient Indian, and it involves the

doctrine of the incarnation of God, of the mortification of the flesh, of spiritual introversion,¹ and from these it developed the ascetic, contemplative, monkish life which is the most perfect blossom of the Christian idea. But this idea could only express itself in a very confused manner in dogmatics, and very sadly and gloomily in culture. Yet we see the doctrines of the two schools manifesting themselves everywhere: the evil Satan appears opposed to the good Christ; the world of the spirit is set forth by the latter, that of matter by Satan. Our soul belongs to one, our body to the other, and the whole world of phenomena or Nature is accordingly originally evil, and Satan, the prince of darkness, will allure us with it to destruction, and we must renounce all the sensuous joys of life or we must chasten and torment the body, which is a copyhold of Satan, so that the soul may the more easily soar upward into the light-bright heaven, the glorious kingdom of Christ.

This view of the world, the real idea of Christianity, spread with great rapidity over the whole Roman realm like an infectious disease, and the whole Middle Age endured its agonies, sometimes in the delirium of fever, and anon in death-like exhaustion, and we moderns still feel its cramps and debilities in our limbs. Even if one of us be

¹ *In sich selbst versinken*, the sinking into one's self, or so to say God and let it in our own inner being — *Thorn-bush*.

in health, he cannot escape the general lazar-house atmosphere, and he feels miserable as the only sound man among utter invalids. When it shall come to pass that mankind shall regain their perfect health, when peace shall be restored between body and soul and they blend again in their original harmony, then we shall hardly understand the artificial, unnatural strife which Christianity caused between them. Happier and more beautiful generations, who, begotten in free-choice¹ embraces, will flourish in a religion of joy and pleasure, will smile sadly at their poor ancestors, who, mournful and melancholy, abstained from all enjoyment of this beautiful world, and by mortifying and killing the warm, glowing, coloured sensuousness, almost wasted into cold spectres. Yes, I say it definitely, our descendants will be more beautiful and happier than we are. For I believe in progress, I believe that man was meant to be happy, and I have a higher opinion of Divinity than those pious people who think it only created humanity to make it suffer. I would beforehand, by the blessings of free political and industrial institutions, establish that happiness, which, according to the religious, will be first found in heaven on the day of judgment. True, the one may be as great a folly or as idle a hope

¹ i.e., free-love.—*Translator.*

as the other, and perhaps there is to be no resurrection of humanity either in the politico-moral or in the apostolic-catholic sense. Humanity is perhaps meant for everlasting misery; races are perhaps to be damned for ever, trampled on by despots, bought and sold by their accomplices, and mocked by their lackeys. Ah! if this be so, we must strive to uphold Christianity, even if we believe it to be an error. Uphold it we must: one must go in the monkish cowl and barefoot over Europe, and preach the nothingness of all earthly goods or goodness and asceticism, and hold before flagellated and mocked men the consoling crucifix, and promise them—after death—all the seven heavens up there on high.

It is perhaps because the magnates of this world are so sure of their power, and have determined in their hearts to eternally abuse it, to our woe, that they are convinced of the necessity of Christianity for the people, and it is at bottom a tender feeling for humanity which makes them take such pains to maintain this religion.¹

The final destiny of Christianity or the duration of religion depends on whether we need it. This religion was a benefit for suffering mankind for eighteen centuries; it was providential, divine, holy. All the benefits which it conferred on civilisation, by taming the strong and strengthen-

¹ This passage is wanting in the French version.

ing the weak, bound races together by the same feelings and a common language, and whatever else its apologists urge is all of small account in comparison to that greater comfort which it of itself conferred on mankind. Eternal renown is due to that symbol of a suffering God, the Saviour with a cross of thorns, the crucified Christ, whose blood was also the allaying balsam which ran down into the wounds of humanity. The poet will of all others recognise with awe and honour the terrible sublimity of this symbol. The whole system of symbols which express themselves in the art and life of the Middle Age will through all time awaken the amazed admiration of the artist. And indeed what a colossal result it had in Christian art, especially in architecture! How these Gothic cathedrals are in harmony with the general culture, and how the idea of the Church is revealed in them! Everything in them rises and soars, everything transforms itself; the stone sprouts in sprays, branches, and foliage, and becomes a tree, the fruit of the vine, and the branches become flesh and blood; man becomes God—God a pure spirit! Truly the Christian life in the Middle Age is an ever-fertile, inexhaustibly precious mass of material for the poet. Only Christianity could in this world cause conditions involving such bold contrasts, such varied sorrows, such startling beauties, that we might

suppose they had really never existed, and that all was a vast delirious dream, the fevered vision of a crazy god.¹ Nature herself seemed then to be fantastically disguised, and yet, though man, absorbed in abstract subtle investigation of trifles, turned away peevishly from her, she often roused him with a voice so shudderingly sweet, so terribly lovely, with such magic power, that he involuntarily listened and smiled, and was terrified, and even died of it. Here the story of the Nightingale of Basle occurs to me, and as you probably do not know it, I will tell it to you.

"In May 1433, at the time of the Council a company of clergymen went walking in a grove near Basle, prelates and doctors, monks of every colour, and they disputed over theological controversies, and distinguished and argued, or quarrelled about annates, expectatives, and reservations, or debated whether Thomas of Aquinas was a greater philosopher than Bonaventura for all I know! But all at once, in the midst of their dogmatic and abstract discussions, they stopped and stood as if rooted before a blooming linden-tree on which sat a nightingale, who exulted and

¹ A simile which Hume repeats several times in his work. It appears to have been suggested by the remark of Seneca (*Trac. Polit.*), that God thinks while man talks thoughts. It is remarkable that Hume, however, is not the only man drunk (*Rever. Bilder, Putnam of Intel.*, vol. i, p. 18, chap. iii), or insane, as in the present instance — *Illustration*.

sobbed in the softest and tenderest melodies. Then the learned men were strangely happy in their souls, the warm notes of spring rushed into their scholastic enclostered hearts, their feelings awoke as from a gloomy winter's sleep, they looked at one another with amazed delight, till one of them made the shrewd remark that there was something wrong in all this; that this nightingale might well be a devil; that this devil drew them with his charming sounds from their Christian discourse, and would fain invite them to lechery and similar sweet sins, and he began to exorcise, probably in the formula which was then used: *Adjuro te per eum, qui venturus est, judicare vivos et mortuos, et cetera.* It is said that at this conjuration the bird replied, 'Yes, I am an vile spirit,' and flew laughing away. But those who heard his song fell ill, it is said, that day, and soon after died." ¹

¹ It may interest many readers, and especially those who are extremely critical as to translations of Heine, to know how Heine himself translated, for which reason I give the original of this tale, as first told by Manlius, and repeated by Grosius in his *Magica, seu Mirabilia Historiarum de Spectris et Apparitionibus*. Islebæ 1597. It occurs in several later works. Heine took his version from Kornmann, Temp. N H 1611.

"Docti quidam viri in Concilio Bashensi animâ gratia in sylvulam egressi fuerant, ut amicè de controversiis illius temporis conferrent. Inter eundem aviculam in modum lusciniæ dulcissimè canentem audiunt admirantur vocis dulcedinem, cujus sit avis cantus dubitant. Ingressi silvam, arbori insi-

This story needs no comment. It bears all the cruel impress of a time when everything which was sweet and lovely was cried down as devilish. Even the nightingale was slandered, and people crossed themselves when it sang. The true Chris-

dentem aviculam conspicantur, eamque citra rem in iniquum suavissimè exentem attentis omnes et animas et aures auscultant. Tandem is, qui ceteris conditi vilius vel potius alloquitur his verbis aviculam. 'Adjuro te me nunc Cariti, ut indices nobis, quis sis.' Respondit avicula. 'Socius sum ex damnatis immanibus, et destinatum esse ad omnia scelera per ad diem novissimum, et tunc supplicium attingere meum dum esse.' His dictis avolavit ex troa, et cantavit. 'Dignetur deus et immensa et atrox.' 'Juno perit.' Philo-lum,' inquit Philogus Melanchthon, in illi et abbatem. Omnes vero qui hunc adjurationi interfuerant, vehementer aegrotare ceperunt, et paulo post sunt mortui. (*De et de statu et Manti*)

It will be seen by this that the bird in question was not "an evil spirit" or devil, but an unfortunate condemned human soul, pouring forth its complaint in the wailing tones of the nightingale, even as of yore Philomela was supposed to lament her cruel fate. Friedrich gives several instances to prove (*Symbolik der Natur*, p. 513), that the song of the melancholy was anciently regarded everywhere as melancholy and mournful, "and of an edifying nature, referring to the change of life and its loss" (*Utergang*). Nor does the unfortunate fly away "laughing," but with the very impulse of "Oh how lasting and vast is eternity!" That the monk in question is, I believe, a comment to the effect that they were punished for a want of pity and charity. As Heine tells the true and whole inner or true meaning is quite perversed. It appears to have been conceived by some heretic of the Middle Ages. Heine, however, ignorantly follows the Protestant Melanchthon in his half-understanding of it, and not the original *Inter-*
lator

tian walked with agonised, reserved feelings, like an abstracted spectre here and there in blooming Nature. I may discuss this relation of the Christian to Nature in another book, and more fully when I fundamentally treat of German popular beliefs in explanation of the new romantic literature. At present I can only remark that French authors, misled by German authorities, are all in error when they assume that these popular beliefs were the same during the Middle Age all over Europe. It was only as regarded the good principle, or the kingdom of Christ, that people held all over Europe the same views; the Roman Church took good care of that, and whoever differed from the prescribed opinion was a heretic. But in different countries there were different views as regards the evil principle and the kingdom of Satan, and in Germany they varied much from those of the Latin South.¹ This was caused by the fact that the Christian priesthood did not reject the old national gods, whom they found existing, as if they were idle fancies, cobwebs of the brain, but allowed them a real existence as male and female devils, who had lost by the triumph of Christ their power

¹ *Romanischen Süden*. As here employed, *Romanisch* means neither Roman nor Romanesque nor Romantic, but Latin, as applied to the descendants of the ancient Latin-speaking races.
—Translator.

over mankind, and who now strove by wanton smiles and wicked wiles to lead man into sin. All Olympus became an aerial fantastic hell,¹ and when a poet of the Middle Ages sang the history of the gods of Greece, however beautifully the pious Christian saw in it all only spectres and devils. This gloomy delusion of the monks bore most bitterly on poor Venus, who passed specially for a daughter of Beelzebub, and the excellent knight Tannhäuser said to her very face —

"O Venus, lovely lady mine
Thou art a devil's child!"

For she had allured Sir Tannhäuser into that wondrous cave which is also called the Venusberg, of which the legend went that the beautiful goddess there led with her damsels and page-boys and games and dances, the maddest merrymaking. Poor Diana, despite her chastity, was not safe from a similar fate and she was made to wander by night with her nymphs through the forests, whence the legend of the raging hunt of the Wild Hunt.²

¹ *Die lustige Hölle*, 'an airy hell.' In 1704, a German, "Tout l'Olympe est un enfer d'un côté."

² Popular legend as well as scientific tradition ascribe a very different origin to the Wild Hunt, which is said to come from Oden, Rodenstein, or Hackelberg, which names are of a Northern origin. Diana as Hecate was the dread progenitress of all the witches in classic times as she is still in Italy and the

Here the Gnostic view of the deterioration of that which was divine shows itself in all its fullness, and it was in this changing of the forms of earlier national faiths that the idea of Christianity manifests itself most profoundly and perfectly.

The national faith in Europe and in the North, far more than in the South, was pantheistic; its mysteries and symbols, were related to a worship of Nature. In every element man revered wondrous beings, in every tree breathed a divinity; the whole world of phenomena was deified throughout; but Christianity reversed the view, and in place of a deified Nature gave us one utterly be-devilled. But the gay and smiling images of Grecian gods, made more beautiful by art, which ruled with Roman culture in the South, could not be so easily changed into hideous and horrible satanic masques as the forms of German gods, which had of course been modelled by no artistic sense, and were, from the first, as grim and gloomy as the North itself. Therefore there could not be created by you in France any such darkling horrors of devildom as with us, and even demonology and witchcraft assumed with you a more cheerful form.

Christian Middle Ages added nothing to the nocturnal terrors with which she was anciently surrounded. In Europe, as in India, she was the Moon-cat who all night long hunted the star-mice. Heine is here quite in the right as to his principle, but very unfortunate in his illustrations. *Vide* notes to "the goddess Diana," with which this work ends.—*Translator.*

How beautiful, clear, and rich in colour are your legendary tales in comparison with ours—those monstrous abortions, which consist of blood and mist, and which grin at us so grisly and so grim! Our mediæval poets, who generally chose materials which had been first invented or worked up in Brittany and Normandy, gave, perhaps intentionally, as much as was possible of that cheerful old French spirit. But in our national poems and our oral popular tales there ever remained that dusky mystical Northern spirit, of which you have hardly an idea. You too have, like us, different kinds of elementary spirits, but they are as different from ours as a German is from a Frenchman. How clear, and especially how clean, are the demons in your fabliaux and romances of chivalry compared with our obscure, and often obscene, *canaille* of ghosts! Your fairies and elementary spirits, from whatever source derived, from Wales or Arabia, are at least naturalised, and a French ghost is as different from a German *Geist* as a dandy who lounges on the Boulevard Coblenze differs from a German porter. Your water-nymphs—for instance, Melusina—differ from ours as much as a princess differs from a washerwoman. How the fairy Morgana would be frightened should she meet a German witch stark naked, smeared with ointment, riding on a broom to the Brocken! This mountain is no

charming Avalon, but a rendezvous for all that is hideous and horrible. On its summit sits Satan in the form of a black goat. Every witch approaches him with a candle in her hand, and kisses him behind where the back ends. After this ceremony the infamous sisterhood dance round him, and sing, "Donderemus! Donderemus!" The goat bleats, the infernal company¹ yell and hurrah. It is a bad omen for the witch who loses a shoe, for it is a sign that she will be burned during the year to come. But the mad music of the Sabbat, which is for all the world like that of Berlioz, drowns all painful forebodings, and when the poor witch awakes in the morning from her intoxication, she lies naked and weary in the ashes by the extinguished fire.²

¹ *Chakut*, probably from *cajute*, a cabin, hence cabinet or select assembly. Hence the American "in cahoot."—*Translator*.

² In these passages Heine, to flatter his public, compares the higher class of early literary French romances with the lowest of later popular German witch-tales. But according to Prætorius (*Of Witch-Meetings in France*, p. 281, *Blockesberge*), Bodinus, Sprenger, and many other authorities, the witchcraft of France was precisely the same in every respect as that which is here described as peculiarly German. The witchcraft of the Church, which was so enormously developed by the Bull of Pope Innocent VIII., and which was based on a pact with the devil, was the same wherever the power of the Pope prevailed, and wherever the Catholic law, as laid down by the official *Malleus magicarum* and Grillandus, was accepted. Italian witchcraft

The best information as to these witches is to be found in the *Daemonologie* of the strictly honourable and deeply learned Doctor Nicholas Remigius, the criminal judge of the Duke of Lorraine. This sagacious man had indeed the best of opportunities to learn the ways of witches, for he was "instructor" in their trials, and in his time, and in Lorraine alone, eight hundred women mounted the funeral pyre after being found guilty of sorcery.¹ The proof consisted generally in this: the hands and feet of the accused were tied, and then the victim was thrown into the water. If she sank and was drowned, she was innocent, if she floated, she was held to be guilty, and burned alive. Such was the logic of that time.

As a fundamental trait in the character of German demons, we see that everything idyl has

as described by Pico Mirandola in "*La Strega*," is in every detail identical with that depicted by Hume. The real motive of the witch persecution was to suppress heresy, and nine tenths of all that was known about witchcraft and its horrors came from the Church, and was disseminated by it all over the world (Horst).

¹ The words of Remigius on this subject are — "I have been for sixteen years a judge of witches. I have with my helpers during this time convicted eight hundred *accused and* *witches*, and burned them in honour of God." — Remigius, *Daemonolatriæ*, 1st part, xv p. 74 (not *Daemonologie*, as Hume gives it). This work is full of information but far superior to it is the *Dæmonomachie* of Georg Christian Horst (Frankfurt-a-M., 1818), a book of genius written in a singularly liberal spirit for its time. — *Translator*.

been stripped from them, and what is vulgar and horrible is intimately mingled in their nature. The more coarsely familiar they are in approaching us, the more horrible is the effect. Nothing is so uncanny as our knocking-spirits, goblins, and brownies. Prætorius in his *Anthropodæmus Plutonicus* has in this relation a passage which I here copy from Dobeneck.¹

“The ancients had no other opinion as to noisy spirits than that they were really human beings in the form of little children with parti-coloured short frock or garment. Some add to this that they sometimes have a knife in their backs, sometimes something else, according to whatever instrument it was with which they were slain, which is full grim and grisly to behold. For superstitious people think they are the souls of those who have been murdered in the house. And they gossip many tales, as that when the goblins have done good service for a while, they made themselves so beloved that their friends have earnestly desired to see them, and begged it; to which the noise-spirits never willingly assented, declaring

¹ The *Anthropodæmus* is a work of nearly 1300 pages, devoted to descriptions of all kinds of marvellous beings. It will be found fully discussed in another chapter. That of Friedrich L. v. Dobeneck is entitled *Des Deutschen Mittelalters Volksglauben und Heroensagen*, Berlin, 1815. Its author also makes great use of Prætorius.—*Translator*

that no one could behold them without being horrified. Yet when it so came that these girls would not forego their curiosity, the goblins mentioned a place in the house where they might be seen in person, but told them they must have ready a pail of cold water. And what happened was that a goblin showed himself on the ground, lying naked on a cushion with a great murderous knife sticking in his back. At which many a maid was so much frightened as to faint. Whereupon the Thing jumped up, seized the water, and dashed it over the girl, so that she came to herself. Whereupon the girls lost their yearning, and never more desired to see dear Chimney.¹ The goblins have all names of their own, but are generally called Chim. And when they are well inclined to the men or women servants, they do for them all their housework, curry and feed the horses, clean out the stables, scour up everything, and attend to everything in the house, and under their care the cattle thrive and grow. For this the goblin must be caressed by the house-folk: he must not be annoyed in the least, either by being troubled

¹ In Prætorius, *Coquet Chimney, or Chimney-men*. He tells us of all this as German, but in Tuscany the peasants tell of evil in household goblins, who play all kind of tricks on the servants, maids, yet do all their work for them. The chief of the evil is called *Dusio*—*Traitor*.

at or neglected as to food. If, for instance, a cook has once taken one of them into the house as her secret assistant, she must every day bring for him, to a certain place, at a certain time, his dishful of good victuals, and then go her way; after that she may idle about and go to bed early; in the morning she will find all her work properly done. But should she once neglect her duty or forget to prepare his food, she will have to do all her own work and have all kinds of mishaps, so that she will scald herself with hot water, break pots and pans, or upset the cooking, which ends in being scolded out of doors by the mistress or master—at which the goblin has often enough been heard to snigger or laugh. Such goblins always remain in a house, though the servants be changed. Yes, ~~and~~ a maid on going away will commend her goblin, and give him a good character to the one succeeding her, so that he may wait on the next in turn. And if she did not follow instructions, she had no end of bad luck, and ere long must herself leave.”

The following short story is perhaps one of the grimmest of these tales.

“A servant-maid had for many years an invisible brownie, who would sit by her on the hearth, where she had cleared away his own little place for him, and where they talked together during the long winter evenings. Once she begged Heinz-

chen, or Harry, as he was called, to let her see him in his natural form, but Hemzchen always refused to do so. But at last he consented, and said if she would go into the cellar he would be visible. Then the girl took a candle, went down into the cellar, and there she saw a dead babe floating in an open barrel of blood. The girl had many years before given birth to an illegitimate child, killed it, and hidden the corpse in a barrel."

However, the Germans as they are, often find their best enjoyment in the terrible, and their popular tales of goblins often abound in delightful incidents. Especially amusing are the stories of Hudeken, a *robbit* who had his being in the twelfth century at Hildesheim, of whom much is still told in spinning-circles and in ghost-stories. A frequently published passage from an old chronicle narrates of him the following:—

"In the year 1132 there appeared an evil spirit for a long time unto many men in the bishopric of Hildesheim, and it was in the form of a peasant with a hat on his head; wherefore the peasants in their Saxon tongue called him Hudeken (Hoodlin, or Little Cap). This spirit took pleasure in the company of men, to whom he revealed himself visibly or invisibly, asking or answering questions. He abused no one without cause; but if any one laughed at or abused him,

he repaid the injustice received with full measure.¹ When Count Burchard de Luka (Burcardus von Luca—*Prætorius*) was murdered by Count Hermann von Wiesenburg, and the lands of the latter were in danger, Hudeken awoke the Bishop Bernard von Hildesheim from his sleep, saying, 'Arise, thou bald-head! the county of Wiesenburg is abandoned and void by murder, and thou mayst easily occupy it.' So the bishop assembled his armed men, attacked the domain of the guilty Count, and annexed it, with the assent of the Emperor, to his own bishopric.

"This spirit often warned the said bishop, all unsought, of coming danger. He showed himself many times in the court-kitchen, where he talked with the cooks, and did them much good service, and as they gradually became familiar with Hudeken, a kitchen-boy ventured, when he appeared, to jeer him and throw dirty water on him. The spirit begged the head-cook or master of the kitchen to restrain the boy from his impudence, to which the master-cook replied, 'Thou art a spirit, and yet art afraid of a boy!' To which Hudeken replied, threateningly, 'Since

¹ In the French version of this work Heine says, "J'em prunte à la chronique du cloître de Hirschgau par l'Abb Trithème le passage suivant." It is given in the *Anthropologie* of Prætorius after the foregoing remarks on goblins but Heine follows the old text—*Translator*.

you will not punish the boy. I will show you within a few days whether I fear him.' And it came to pass soon after that the boy who had abused the spirit sat sleeping alone one evening in the kitchen. Thereupon the goblin seized and strangled him, tore him to pieces, and put them in the pots upon the fire to boil. When the cook found out this freak, he cursed the spirit, and then Hudeken next day spoiled all the roasts which were upon the spits with the blood and poison of toads, which he cast over them. Revenge caused the cook to curse him again, for which the spirit cast him over a sham enchanted bridge into a deep ditch.¹

"It was his wont to go the rounds every night on the walls and towers, and compel the guards to keep good watch. A man who had a faithful wife, once before he went a-journeying said in jest to Hudeken, 'Good spirit, I now commend to thee my wife; guard her well.' As soon as he had gone, the adulterous dame let all her lovers come, one after the other. But Hudeken kept them from her, and threw them all out of bed on the floor. When the man came back from his journey, Hudeken approached him from afar, crying out unto him, 'I rejoice in thy return,

¹ That is, he produced by glamour or illusive magic the appearance of a bridge, over which the cook was induced to pass.—*Translator*.

because I am freed from the dire duty with which thou didst charge me. Truly, I have with terrible trouble kept thy wife from actual adultery, but give me no more such work, for verily I had rather take care of all the pigs in all Saxony than of a woman who, by wiles and tricks, seeks the embraces of her lovers.’”

For accuracy's sake, I must observe that Hudeken's head-covering differs from the common costume of the goblins. These are generally clad in grey, and wear a red cap. At least, it is so in Denmark, where they are at present most numerous.¹ I was once of the opinion that these kobolds liked living in Denmark because they were so fond of red groats;² but a young Danish poet, Mr. Andersen, whom I had the pleasure to know this summer here in Paris, has expressly assured me that the Nissen, as kobolds are called in Denmark,

¹ More so in Northern Italy, where the red-capped mannikin who can bestow treasures is generally believed in by the *contadini*. He is here unquestionably derived from the very ancient Picus or Picumnus, a goblin-god, who was the personified red-headed woodpecker (Preller, *Rom. Mythologie*). This bird revealed treasures and his red head suggested the cap. These red-capped goblins occur in Roman art. They extended to Scandinavia, and thence to the Algonkin Indians of America. Vide “Algonkin Legends of New England,” by Charles G. Leland — *Translator*.

² *Roth groat* is, oats or barley-groat. The Danes are continually rallied by the Germans in regard to their eating this dish.

prefer to everything else porridge, or mush, and butter. When they are once settled in a house, they have little will to leave it. However, they never come unannounced: and when they wish to dwell in any place, they forewarn the master in this fashion. They bear by night many chips of wood into the house and put catkins-dung into the milk-pots. Should the master of the house neglect to cast out the chips, or should the family drink the defiled milk, then the goblins always remain. A poor Jutlander was once so much annoyed by the society of such a kobold that he resolved to give up his house and so put his "sticks"¹ on a waggon, and so went to the next village to settle. But on the route, looking behind him, he saw peering out of a barrel the red-capped head of the goblin, who cried out in a friendly tone, *Wir flitten* ("We're moving—we flit").

I have perhaps delayed too long over these little demons, and it is time that I go to the great ones; but all these stories illustrate the beliefs and character of the German people. In bygone centuries this faith was as powerful as that in the Church. When the learned Dr. Remigius had finished his great book on witchcraft, he thought he knew his subject so well that he too could

¹ *Siebensachen*, "seven things," a small mixed lot of furniture and household goods; generally used in a pejorative way. It corresponds to the English "few stick" — *Traveller*.

bewitch, and being a conscientious man, gave himself up to justice as a wizard, and as a wizard he was burnt alive.

- These horrors did not originate directly in the Catholic Church, but indirectly in this, that it so craftily and meanly manipulated the old German national religion as to change its pantheistic view of the world into a pandemonic, and turned all the early saints of the people into devils. But man does not willingly abandon what was dear to him and to his forefathers, and deep feelings cling as with iron clamps to us even after they have been distorted and defaced. Therefore, this old disfigured and transformed popular faith held its own, perhaps longer than Christianity, in Germany, which latter did not take such deep root in its nationality. In the time of the Reformation, the belief in Catholic legends very soon disappeared, but not that in magic and witchcraft.

Luther did not believe in the marvels of the Church, but he had firm faith in devilry. His "Table-Talk" is full of curious tales of satanic devices, goblins, and witches. He himself, in his trials, often believed that he contended with the "God-be-with-us" in person.¹ On the Wurtburg, while he was translating the New Testament, he

¹ "Er glaubte manchmal mit dem liebhaftigen Gott-sei-bei-uns zu kämpfen." That is to say, the devil who calls forth such exclamation.—*Translator*

was so disturbed by the devil that he threw his inkstand at his head. Ever since that time the devil has had a great horror of ink, especially printer's ink. In the "Table-Talk" referred to there are many delightful bits relative to the craftiness of the devil, and I cannot refrain from giving one.

"Dr. Martin Luther relates that once some jolly companions were drinking together in a tavern, and there was one, a wild, prodigate fellow. He had said if any one would give him a good treat of wine, he would sell his very soul for it.

"Soon after there came into the room a man who sat down and drank with him, and said, among other things, to this man who had been so daring—

"Hear! thou didst say just now that if any one would give thee a good treat of wine, thou wouldst give him thy soul."

"That I will," repeated the fellow, "if I can only rollick and frolic and be jolly to-day."¹

"The man, who was the devil, said 'Yes,' and he soon after disappeared. And when that carouser had been gay all day, and at last was roaring drunk, there came that same man—the devil—who sat down opposite to him, and questioned the other pot-companions and said—

¹ "Ja ich will's thun, lass mich heute recht lustig haben, demmen und guter Dinge sein."

“Good fellows! what think ye? Suppose a man buys a horse, do the saddle and bridle also belong to him or not?”

“At this all were terrified. Then the man spoke again—

“‘Come, say it out quickly!’

“Then they roused up and said—

“‘Yes, he should have the saddle and bridle with it.’

“Then the devil caught up the wild rough rowdy, and flew with him through the roof, but so that no one ever knew what had become of him.”

Though I have the greatest respect for our great Martin Luther, it seems to me that he quite misunderstood the character of Satan; for the latter certainly does not think of the body with such contempt as this tale intimates. Whatever evil one may say of the devil, he cannot be accused of being a Spiritualist.

But Luther misunderstood the sentiments of the Pope and of the Catholic Church even more than he did those of the devil. According to my strict impartiality I must defend both, as well the devil against this too zealous man. In fact, if I am put upon my conscience, I must confess that Pope Leo was really much more sensible than Luther, and that the latter did not at all understand the fundamental principles of the Catholic Church. For Luther did not compre-

hend that the idea of Christianity, the utter destruction of Sensualism, was altogether too much in contradiction to human nature to be ever perfectly realised in life; he had not comprehended that Catholicism was a compromise between God and the devil—that is, between spirit and matter, by which the autoeracy of the spirit was theoretically declared, but the material element placed in such condition that it could practically exercise all its annulled rights. Hence the shrewd system of confession which the Church invented for the benefit of the senses, though always according to forms which descended ever, act of sensuality, and secure to the spirit its arrogant usurpation. You may yield to the tender impulses of the heart and embrace a pretty girl, but you must confess that it ~~is~~ a shameful sin, and for this sin there must be atonement. That this atonement could be effected by paying money, was as great a benefit for humanity as it was profitable for the Church. The Church had, so to speak, a fine or settled price for every carnal indulgence; hence a tax for all sorts of sins, and there were holy pedlars who, in the name of the Roman Church, retailed indulgences for every rated sin all over the land. Such a one was Tetzel, whom Luther first attacked. Our historians think that this protest against the sale of indulgences was a uniling

event, and that it was only through Roman obstinacy that Luther, who at first only fought against a clerical abuse, was urged thereby to attack the entire authority of the Church, even to its topmost summit. But that is an error; the traffic in indulgences was no misuse or abuse; it was a necessary consequence of the whole Church system, and by attacking it, Luther attacked the Church itself, and it was obliged to condemn him as a heretic. Leo X., the refined Florentine, the pupil of Politian, the friend of Raphael, the Greek philosopher with the triple crown which the Council conferred on him, perhaps because he suffered from a malady which certainly was not caused by Christian abstinence, and which was in those days very dangerous—Leo de' Medicis, how he must have smiled at the poor, chaste, simple monk, who fancied that the Gospel was the chart of Christendom, and that this chart must be true! Perhaps he never really knew or cared to know what Luther wanted, so occupied was he with the building the Church of St. Peter, the expense of which was to be defrayed by the sale of indulgences, so that it was really built by sin, and was a monument of lust—like that pyramid which an Egyptian harlot erected with the money which she had earned by prostitution. It might indeed be said much more truly of this church

than of the Cathedral of Cologne, that it was built by the devil. This triumph of Spiritualism, that sensuality itself should build for it its most beautiful temple, and that from confessions of fleshly sins the means were drawn to glorify the spirit, was not understood in the German North. For here, far sooner than under the glowing sky of Italy, was it possible to practise a Christianity which made the very least concession to sensuality. We of the North are of colder blood, and did not need so many indulgences for fleshly sins as the paternal Leo supplied us with. The climate aids us very much in practising Christian virtues, and on the 31st of October 1516, when Luther nailed his thesis on the door of the Augustine church, perhaps the moat of Wittenberg was frozen, and people could skate on it; which being a very cold pleasure, is consequently not a sin.

I have perhaps, in the foregoing remarks, used the words Spiritualism and Sensualism, but they do not relate here, as with the French philosophers, to the two different sources of our knowledge. I use them much more, as must appear from the meaning of my remarks, to indicate those two different methods of thought, of which one will exalt the spirit by seeking to annihilate matter, while the other seeks to vindicate the natural rights of matter against the usurpations of the spirit.¹

¹ This passage is thus given in the French version of Heine's

I call especial attention to the foregoing beginning of the Lutheran Reformation, which reveals its whole spirit, because here in France the old misunderstandings still prevail as to the Reformation which Bossuet has disseminated in his *Histoire des Variations*, and which are even current among German writers.¹ The French have only understood the negative side of our Reformation; they saw in it only a strife against Catholicism, and often thought it was the same battle, on the same grounds, as in France. But the motives were radically different. The struggle

works :—"Je viens me servir des mots *spiritualisme* et *sensualisme*. Je les expliquerai plus tard, quand je parlerai de la philosophie allemande. Il me suffit ici de faire observer que je n'emploie pas ces expressions en vue de systèmes philosophiques, mais seulement pour distinguer deux systèmes sociaux, dont l'un, le spiritualisme, est basé sur le principe qu'il faut annuler toutes les prétentions des sens pour donner la domination entière à l'esprit, qu'il faut mortifier, flétrir, écraser notre chair pour glorifier d'autant plus notre âme, pendant que l'autre système, le sensualisme, revendique les droits de la chair, qu'on ne devrait et qu'on ne pourrait pas annuler."

¹ This passage is also given with some variation in the first French edition (*Revue des Deux Mondes*), and with yet another change in the edition of Calmann Levy, Paris, 1884. The only passage of any consequence in these French versions is the following :—"Les commencements de la réforme révèlent déjà toute sa portée. Aucun Français n'a encore compris la signification de ce grand fait. Les idées plus erronées règnent en France au sujet de la réforme; et je dois ajouter que ces idées empêcheront peut-être les Français d'arriver jamais à une juste appréciation de la vie allemande."

against Catholicism, to the religious struggle a war which Spiritualism could not but have provoked that it was, however, the result of a process of development which was not the same in France as in Germany. In France, the power and rule of the Pope were driven away, the petty details of religion were changed for cold legitimate wives, the charming images of Madonnas were broken, while here and there sprang up the most ascetic Protestantism. The war against Catholicism in France in the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries was, on the contrary, a strife which was begun by Spiritualism when it saw that it ruled *de facto*, and yet that every act of its government was scorned as illegitimate by Spiritualism, which claimed to rule *de jure*, these acts being most cruelly reviled. Instead of battling, as in Germany, with moral earnestness, they fought in France with licentious jests; instead of disputing theologically, they composed gay satires. The subjects of these were generally the contradictions in which man is involved when he will be all soul, and so there flourished rankly the most delightful tales of pious men who involuntarily succumbed to their animal instincts, or who, to preserve the appearance of holiness, took refuge in hypocrisy. The Queen of Navarre had long before depicted in her novels such contradictions and indecours; her common theme is the relation of priests to

women, as if she would not only make us burst with laughter, but explode all monkhood at the same time.¹ The most piquant and malicious product of this humorous polemic is unquestionably the *Tartuffe* of Molière; for it is not only directed against the Jesuitism of his time, but against Christianity itself—yes, even against the idea of Christianity or Spiritualism. When *Tartuffe* sees the bare bosom of *Dorine*, he exclaims with affected grief and anxiety—

“Le ciel défend, de vrai, certains contentements,
Mais on trouve avec lui des accommodements.”²

By this there is gaily satirised not only common hypocrisy, and the general falsehood which necessarily results from the impracticability of the Christian idea, but the whole system of concessions which Spiritualism must make to Sensuality. In fact, Jansenism had much more reason to complain of being wounded in its feelings than had Jesuitism by the representation of *Tartuffe*, and Molière should make the Methodists of to-day feel quite as uncomfortable as he did the Catholic devout

¹ “Und sie will als dann nicht blass unser Zwerchfell, sondern auch das Monch-thum erschüttern.” This passage is omitted in the French version. A large proportion of the *Cent Nouvelles* is devoted to such tales of priests. But Heine quite forgets that of all this jocose satirical literature originated in Italy

² “Certain delights Heaven to us denies,
But we can make with it a compromise.”

—*Translator.*

of his own times. And it is this which makes Voltaire so great a foe to the Aristophaues and Menanders of his age, not only with respect to events and persons, but to the generally laughable weakness of humanity. Voltaire is always attacked only in its capacity and numerical of topics, as in this respect greatly his inferior.

But Voltaire's persiflage or mockery has fulfilled its mission in France, and to carry it further would be as untimely as unwise. For if we were to destroy the last visible remains of Catholicism, it might easily happen that its idea might assume a new form and put on a new body, even renouncing the very name of Christianity, and in this changed state could be more vexatious and burdensome than in its present broken, ruined, and generally discredited condition. Yes, it has its advantages, that Spiritualism is represented by a religion and a priesthood, the first of which has lost its early vigour, while the last stands in direct opposition to the whole enthusiasm for freedom of this our time.

• But why is Spiritualism then so repulsive to us? Is there anything in it, then, which is so bad? Not at all. Attar of roses is a precious thing, and a phial of it is stimulating and delightful, especially to those who pass their days shut up in a harem. Yet, for all that, we would not have all the roses of life trampled and pressed to get a

few drops of the extract, however delightful and stimulating they might be. We are far more like nightingales, who are enraptured by the rose itself, and quite as blest by seeing its blooming blushes as by its unseen perfume.

I have before declared that it was really Spiritualism which attacked Catholicism among us; but this is only true as regards the beginning of the Reformation, for as soon as Spiritualism had made a breach in the old Church edifice. Sensuality came bursting out of it with all its long-restrained fire and fervency, and Germany became the wildest war-field of intoxication of freedom and sensual pleasure. The oppressed peasants found in the new doctrines weapons wherewith to carry on the war with aristocracy, and there had been a longing for such a war for a century and a half. In Munster, Sensuality ran naked through the streets in the form of Jan von Leyden, who slept with his twelve wives in the great bedstead which is still to be seen in the town-hall. The cloister gates wide open flew everywhere, and nuns and priests rushed into mutual embraces, billing and cooing.¹

¹ *Schnabeln*, to bill, i.e., to kiss. Heine speaks of such amours as Protestant novelties, but there is the most abundant Roman Catholic testimony proving that down to the Reformation a priest who did not keep a concubine was a great exception, either in Italy or Germany. It was Protestantism which taught and inspired such morality as is now found in the Catholicism.—*Translator*.

Yes, the public history of that time consists almost entirely of simply sensual outbursts. We shall see anon how little of it remained in results, how Spiritualism again repressed these rebels, how it step by step strengthened its rule in the North, and finally got its mortal wound from an enemy, Philosophy, which, however, it had nurtured in its own bosom. It is a very complicated and confused affair, hard to disentangle. It is easy enough here for the Catholic party in turn to attribute the worst intentions to these reformers, and, according to them, it was inspired by a desire to render legal the most outrageous debauchery and plunder the Church. Certainly, spiritual interests must always form an alliance with the material to conquer; but in this game the devil had so mixed the cards, that there is nothing certain as to what were the real objects of any one.

The distinguished personages who in the year 1521 were assembled in the Imperial hall at Worms¹ may well have had many thoughts in their hearts which were in contradiction with their words. There sat a young Emperor, who, in all the joy of youthful delight in power, wrapped himself in his new purple mantle, and secretly rejoiced that the proud Roman, who had

¹ In the French version the date is given more accurately. "Les personages illustres qui s'étaient rassemblés le 17 avril 1521, à Worms dans la grande salle de la Diète."—*Translator*.

so often treated right rudely his predecessors in the realm, and had not even yet renounced his pretensions, had now found some one who would set them seriously to rights. The representative of that Roman had on his side the inner delight of reflecting that here was a cause of discord among these Germans, who had, like drunken barbarians, so often invaded and plundered beautiful Italy, and who still threatened it with new attacks and rapine.¹ The lofty prelates were already turning it over in their minds whether they should marry their cooks, and so provide legitimate descendants to inherit their electorates, bishoprics, and abbeys. The minor officers of cities rejoiced in a possible new extension of their freedom. Everybody present had something to make, and was privately thinking of practical profits.

Yet there was one man there who, I am convinced, was not thinking of himself, but of the divine interests which he represented. This man was Martin Luther, the poor monk whom Providence had chosen to break that Roman world-power against which the most powerful emperors and boldest sages had fought in vain. But Providence knew very well on what kind of shoulders

¹ The French version has here the following passage, not given in German: "Les princes temporels se jouissaient de pouvoir mettre la main sur les biens de l'Église au moyen des idées que répandait la nouvelle doctrine."

it had laid this burden. What was wanting here was not only a spiritual, but also a physical strength. A body trained by cloistral severity and chastity with a constitution of steel was needed to endure the bitter trials of such a mission. Yet at this time our dear master was lean and very pale, so that the rosy, well-fed gentlemen of the Diet looked almost with pity on the pitiable man in the black cowl. But he was right vigorous and healthy: his nerves were so firm that the brilliant tumultitude did not in the least overawe him,¹ and even his lungs must have been very strong. For after he had delivered his long defence, he was obliged, because the Emperor did not understand High German, to repeat it in Latin. I am always vexed when I recall this, for our dear master stood by an open window in a full draught of air while the sweat fell from his forehead. He must have been tired enough, and no doubt his throat was parched; and "he must have been very dry," thought the Duke of Brunswick—at least we read that he at once sent to Martin Luther from his hostelry three *kanne* of the best Embeck beer.² I shall never forget this noble trait of the House of Brunswick.

¹ The French version adds to this "et ses poudrons devaient être d'une grande force."

² A *kanne* was something more than an imperial English quart, or about three pints.—*Translator*.

There are in France as false ideas of the hero of the Reformation as of the Reformation itself. The main cause of this mis-understanding really is that Luther is not only the greatest, but the *Germanest* man in our history; and as in his character all the virtues and weak points of Germans are united in the grandest manner, so he represented personally our strange Germany. For he had peculiar traits, such as we seldom find united, and which we generally regard as utterly contradictory. He was equally a dreamy mystic and yet a practical man. His thoughts had hands as well as wings: he spoke and acted; he was not only the tongue, but the sword of his time. And he was at once a cool scholastic picker and sifter of words and an inspired God-intoxicated¹ prophet. When he had worked himself weary all day long with his dogmatic distinctions, he in the evening took his flute, and, while looking at the stars, melted away in melody and pious reverie. This man, who could scold like a fishwife, could also be as gentle as a tender maid. He was often wild as the storm which roots up oaks, and then soft as the zephyr playing with violets. He was filled with the most terrible fear of God and a sense of sacrifice to the Holy Ghost; he could

¹ *Gottberauschter*. I think it was Novalis (F. von Hardenburg) who first used this expression, in reference to Spinoza.—*Translator*.

lose himself in the depths of pure spirituality, and yet he knew full well the glories of this world and their worth, and from his mouth came the far-famed saying—

“Who loves not women, wine, and song,
Remains a fool his whole life long.”¹

He was, I may say, a complete man, an absolute man, in whom spirit and matter were not divided. Therefore it would be as wrong to call him a Spiritualist as a Sensualist. How shall I express it?—there was in him something of an underived original, incomprehensible miraculous, such as we find in all providential men:² something terribly naïf, clumsily-clever, sublimely narrow-minded, unconquerably dæmonic.

¹ In the French edition this is given as follows:

“Wer liebt nicht Wein, Weiber und Gesang,
Der bleibt ein Narr sein Lebentag.”

That is to say, *women* is substituted for *woman*, which speaks not only the moral, but also the metre of the original. In his own German text Heine says that this “blossomed *in Luther*” from the mouth of Luther.” This singular simile, by which the great reformer is made to appear as a flower-pot, was changed in French to *est tombé*, or “fell from.”—*Trans. Editor*.

² *Providentielle Männer*, men created by Providence in great special emergencies. “Unconquerably dæmonic” or *Unbezwingbar-dæmonische*, appears to have been beyond Heine’s French resources, as it does not appear in the Paris version. Goethe uses the term in reference to the young Duke of Weimar and that as if it were original with him. The dæmon of Socrates was simply his own original genius. *Translator*.

Luther's father was a miner in Mannsfeld, and there the boy often descended with him to the subterranean laboratory where mighty metals grew and first-born fountains ran, and there it may be that his young heart, all unconscious, took in the deepest secrets of Nature, or was fairied or bewitched by the elves of the mountain. Hence it came too, perhaps, that so much earthy stuff, so much of the dross or slag of human passion, stuck to him, with which he has been continually reproached. But he was wronged therein; for without that mingling of earth he would never have been a man of deeds. Pure souls cannot *act*. Do we not learn from Jung Stilling's spectre-lore that spirits can manifest themselves visibly in full colour with perfect distinctness, and are able to walk, run, dance, and do all things to sight like human beings, but can effect nothing material, nor so much as move the lightest toilet-table from its place?

Glory to Luther! glory to the valiant, valued man to whom we owe the rescue of our most precious possessions, and by whose benefits we now exist. It little becomes us to bewail his narrow views. The dwarf who stands upon the giant's shoulders can, of course, see farther than the giant himself, especially with spectacles; but to this elevated view is wanting elevation of feeling, or the giant heart which we cannot make our own. Still

less does it become us to pass sentence on his failings: these faults have profited us more than the virtues of a thousand others. The refined subtlety of Erasmus and the mildness of Melancthon would never have brought us so far as the godlike brutality of Brother Martin often did. Yes, his faults, which I have pointed out, have borne the most precious fruit—fruit by which all mankind has been refreshed. From that day of the Diet, when Luther denied the authority of the Pope, and openly declared “that his doctrines must be refuted by texts from the Bible itself or upon reasonable grounds,” there began a new era in Germany. The chain with which St. Boniface had fettered the German Church to Rome was severed. This Church, which had been previously an integral part of the great hierarchy, crumbled away and divided into religious democracies. The religion itself changed its nature, the Indian-Gnostic element disappeared, and we see how the Judaic-deistic principle is rising in it. Evangelical Christianity is being developed. And as the most needed demands of matter are not only considered but made legitimate, religion becomes once more a truth. The priest becomes human and takes a wife and begets children as God ordained. On the other hand, God himself becomes a celestial old bachelor without family, the legitimacy of his son is contested, the saints are obliged

to resign, the wings of the angels are clipped, the mother of God loses all claim to the heavenly crown, and she is forbidden to work miracles.¹ And it may be observed that since that time, and especially since natural science has made such progress, miracles have ceased. Whether it be that the Lord does not like to have the doctors watch his fingering so closely, or that he will not enter into competition with Bosco, certain it is that in these later days, though religion is in such danger, he has disdained to help it by a brilliant miracle. Perhaps he intends in future to exclude all holy tricks from all the new religions which he may introduce here on earth, and prove the truths of the new doctrines, always by reason—which is indeed the most reasonable way. At least, there has been no miracle manifested by Saint-Simonism, which is the newest faith, unless it be that the tailor's bill which Saint Simon left was paid ten years after his death in good cash by his disciples. I seem even now to see the excellent Father Olinde in the Salle Taitbout, rising as if inspired, and showing to the astonished congregation the re-

¹ In reference to the famous placard said to have been placed in the Cour des Miracles during the excitement caused by the Convulsionnaires —

• Du pai le roi—défense à Dieu
• De faire miracle dans ce lieu."

ceipted tailor's bill. Young grocers startled,¹ pricked up their ears, and the tailors began to believe.

However, if we in Germany through Protestantism lost much poetry in old miracles and other ancient things, we received ample amends. Men became more virtuous and nobler. Protestantism exercised the happiest influence as to purity of manners, and that strict practice of duty which we commonly call morals—in fact, Protestantism has taken in many communities a direction by which it finally quite coincides with it, and the Bible only remains as a beautiful illustration or parable. We see an especially happy change in the life of clergymen. There disappeared with celibacy also much pious immorality and monkish crime. Among the Protestant clergymen we often find the most virtuous men—men whom even the Stoics of old would have respected. One should have travelled on foot as a poor student through North Germany to know how much virtue and—to give it a good qualifying adjective—how much evangelical virtue is often to be found in a humble pastor's home. How oft have I of a winter even—

¹ "Junge Epiciers stutzen. In the French version *Epiciers, de se regarder l'un l'autre la bouche ouverte*. *Sepp* implies not only being stultified, but also a certain degree of observation, as stopping in sudden embarrassment, glibbing or balking. The French version adds that they were 'tutted' at this transubstantiation of paper to gold.—*Prax. Liter.*

ing there found a hospitable reception, I a stranger, who had no other recommendation save that I was hungry and weary! And when I had eaten and slept well, and in the morning would wend my way, then came the old pastor in his dressing-gown and gave me a parting blessing which truly never brought me any ill-luck, and the good-natured, gossiping Frau Pastorin put pieces of bread and butter into my pocket, which did not less refresh me, while in the background and in silence stood the preacher's pretty daughters with rosy cheeks and violet eyes, the memory of whose modest fire warmed my heart a whole winter's day.

When Luther announced the proposition that his doctrine should only be refuted by the Bible itself or on reasonable grounds, he opened to human intelligence and reason the right to explain the Bible, and so reason was recognised as head-judge in all religious debates. Hence resulted in Germany the so-called spiritual liberty also known as freedom of thought. Thought became a right, and the decisions of reason were made legal. It is true enough that for several centuries before this men could think and speak with tolerable freedom, and the schools disputed over subjects which we must wonder that they dared to mention in the Middle Age. But this resulted from the distinction which was drawn between theological and philosophical truth, a distinction

by which they expressly guarded against heresy; and all this, moreover, was only heard in the lecture-rooms of universities, and was uttered in an abstruse Gothic Latin, of which the people understood nothing, so that little harm was to be feared for the Church. However, the Church never really permitted such proceedings, and now and then she actually burnt some poor scholar by way of protest. But after Luther there was no distinction observed between theological and philosophical truth, and people disputed in the market-place in the German country dialect, and that without fright or fear. The rulers who accepted the Reform legitimatised such freedom of thought, and a weighty world-wide result of it has been German philosophy.

In fact, human intelligence could never have spoken out so freely¹ in Greece as in Germany from the middle of the eighteenth century to the French invasion. Especially in Prussia was there a limitless freedom of thought. The Marquis of Brandenburg had understood that as he could only become legitimate king of Prussia through Protestant principles, he must also maintain Protestant liberty of thinking.

Since then, things have changed, and the natural protector of our Protestant freedom of

¹ In the French version "*n'a pu s'exprimer et s'évelopper aussi librement*"—*Translator*.

thought has an understanding with the Ultramontane party to suppress it, and, to do this, traitorously uses a weapon which Popery first invented and applied against us—the censorship.

Strange! we Germans are the strongest and the cleverest race. Our princes' relations sit on every throne in Europe; our Rothschilds rule Exchanges through the world; our learned men give laws in every science; we invented gunpowder and printing,¹ and yet he who fires off a pistol among us must pay three thalers fine; and if we publish in the *Hamburger Correspondent*, "My dear wife has given birth to a daughter as fair as freedom," Doctor Hoffmann seizes his red pencil and strikes out "freedom."

Will this last long? I do not know; but I know that the question of the liberty of the press, which is now being so vehemently discussed in Germany, is very closely connected with these preceding remarks; and I believe its solution is not difficult when we reflect that freedom of the press is a natural consequence of freedom of

¹ Carlyle, who should have known better, also repeated the assertion that the German Berthold Schwartz invented gunpowder. A century before Schwartz, Roger Bacon knew it, and a century before Bacon a Norman-Latin recipe *ad faciendum le crake* (how to make a fire-cracker) had set it forth, as is shown in the notes to *The Merchant and the Friar* by Sir Francis Palgrave.—*Translator*

thought, and therefore a Protestant right. For such rights Germany has poured forth its best blood, and it may be that for the same cause it will again do battle.

This is also applied to the question of academic freedom, which at present is so passionately exciting the German mind. Since it has been discovered that political freedom, that is, the love of freedom, prevails particularly in the universities, it has been insisted to sovereigns from every side that these institutions should be suppressed, or at least be changed into ordinary schools; and so new plans are contrived, and the *pro* and *contra* discussed. But the public opponents of the universities seem to have understood the real grounds of the question quite as little as their public advocates. They do not understand that youth is inspired for freedom everywhere, under any form of discipline, and that if the universities should be suppressed, that enthusiastic youth will declare itself in other places, and perhaps in alliance with the youth engaged in commerce and trade. The defenders only try to prove that the best of German learning and science would perish with the universities, and that academic freedom is of advantage to study because youth derives from it such fine opportunities to develop itself in so many directions, and so on; as if so many Greek

accents or a few rude expressions more or less were here the question!

And what would our princes care for all learning or science, studies or culture, should the sacred safety of their thrones be endangered? They would be heroic enough, in such case, to sacrifice all relative benefits for the only Absolute, their own absolute rule.¹ For this has been confided to them by God, and where Heaven commands, all earthly considerations must give way.

And there is as much misunderstanding of the question by the poor professors who come forward as defenders as by the public officials who publicly oppose the universities. Only the Catholic Propaganda in Germany understands the meaning of it, and these pious dwellers in darkness are the most dangerous opponents of our university system. These work against it insidiously by means of falsehood and foul play, and even when one of them (as did lately a magnificent rascal in the Aula¹ at Munich) assumes an amiable air, as if he would speak a word for the universities, a Jesuitical intrigue reveals itself. Well do these cowardly hypocrites know what is to be gained in this game

¹ Heine refers here to the Absolute of German philosophy. The point is lost in the French version, which gives it as "*un seul but absolu*."—*Translator*

² *Aula*, university hall.

for with the universities would fall also the Protestant Church, which has been rooted in them since the Reformation, so that the whole Protestant Church history of later centuries consists almost entirely of theological disputes among the learned men of Wittenberg, Leipzig, Tübingen, and Halle.¹ The spiritual courts are only the dimmed reflection of the theological faculty: they would lose with it all hold and character, and sink into an empty dependence on ministers, or even the police.

But I must not devote too much space to such melancholy reflections, the more so because we have yet to speak of the man of Providence by whom so much that was great was done for the German people. I have already shown how we through him attained the greatest freedom of thought; but Martin Luther gave us not only freedom of action, but the means to act—that is, he gave a body to the soul. He gave language to thought. He created the German language.

This he did by translating the Bible.

In fact, the Divine composer of this book seems to have known quite as well as we that it is not a matter of indifference by whom we are translated: therefore he chose his own translator, and gifted him with the wonderful power to translate from a

¹ Here he omits to notice the Prussian development in England—*Tractarianism*.

Consistency

language which was not only dead but turned into another which had not even yet been born.

Men had, it is true, the Vulgate, which was understood, and the Septuagint, which they might understand. But the knowledge of Hebrew was then utterly extinguished in the Christian world. Only the Jews who kept themselves hidden here and there in a corner of the world, preserved the traditions of this tongue. Like a ghost guarding a treasure which was committed to him when living, this murdered race sat in its gloomy Ghettos keeping watch over the Hebrew Bible, and German scholars could be seen stealing into these ill-famed blind alleys to raise the precious hoard, to gain a knowledge of the Hebrew language. When the Catholic clergy saw that danger was drawing nigh in this direction, that the people might by this side-path attain a knowledge of the true Word of God and discover its Romish falsifications, they would gladly have suppressed all Jewish tradition, and they went to work to destroy all Hebrew books. Then on the Rhine began that persecution of books against which the admirable and excellent Doctor Reuchlin fought so gloriously. Yet the theologians of Cologne, who were active in the strife, were by no means so narrow-minded—especially Hochstraten—as they are depicted in the *Lettere Obscurorum Virorum* by the knight Ulrich von Hutten, the valiant fellow-champion

of Reuchlin.¹ The effort was to suppress the Hebrew language. When Reuchlin conquered, Luther could begin his work. In a letter which he wrote at this time to Reuchlin, he seems to feel the great importance of the victory which the latter had won, and that in a difficult and dependent situation, while he, the Agastine monk, was at perfect liberty. He says very naively in this letter, "*Ego nihil timo, quia nihil habeo*"—"Nothing I fear, because I nothing have."

How Luther ever learned the language into which he translated the Bible is to me to this hour incomprehensible. The old Swabian dialect had utterly passed away, with the knightly poetry of the imperial age of the Hohenstaufen. The old Saxon dialect—the so-called Platt-Deutsch—prevailed in only a part of North Germany, and, in spite of every effort, it never attained to a literary position. If Luther had used for his translation of the Bible the language which was spoken in the Saxony of the day, Adlung would have been right in declaring that the Saxon, especially the dialect of Meissen, is our real High

¹ These letters, which may be called a companion piece to the works of Reuchlin, and of Luther and Melancthon, form one of the best works of humour ever written. They are in the worst and simplest Latin, and are supposed to be addressed to their chief by the most uneducated and ignorant monk exposing all their secrets, sins, and follies. The book bore an immense circulation, and greatly aided the Reformation. *Trinitatis*.

German—that is, our written tongue. But this error has been long disproved. I must lay the more stress on it because it is still current in France. The present Saxon was never a dialect of the German people any more than Silesian, for both are born of Slavonic influence. I frankly confess I do not know how the language which we find in the Bible of Luther originated, but I know that it was through this Bible, of which the press—as yet in its youth—by its black art cast forth thousands of copies among the people, that in a few years the language of Luther spread all over Germany, and was raised to be that of our literature. This written language still prevails in Germany, and gives to our otherwise politically and religiously mangled and divided country a literary unity. Such an inestimable service may indemnify us for the fact that, in the present development of this language there is something wanting in the inward earnestness¹ which we usually find in languages, developed from a single dialect. But the language in Luther's Bible does not need such genial expression, and this old book is an eternal fountain of youth for our tongue. All the expressions and turns of speech which are in the Lutheran Bible are German. The author may use them freely, and as the book

¹ *Innigkeit*, characteristic, original vigour, generally implying cordiality, warmth, or genial depth.

is in the hands of the poorest people, they need no specially erudite preparation to express themselves in a literary form. This fact will, when the great political revolution breaks out, produce remarkable results. Freedom will speak everywhere, and its speech will be Biblical.¹

The original writings of Luther have not less contributed to fix the German language. By their peevish passion they drive deep into the heart of the time. There it is not always nice, but even religious excursions are not made with rose-water. 'A tough log often needs a rough wedge.' In the Bible, Luther's language is always kept within the bounds of a certain dignity out of reverence to the ever-present spirit of God. In his controversial writings, on the other hand, he often gives himself up to his plebeian coarseness, which is at times as grand as it is repulsive. His expressions and images then resemble those colossal stone figures which are found in Indian or Egyptian cave-temples, and whose harsh colouring and strange ugliness at once repel and attract us. In this *barbaric* style² the bold monk often appears like

¹ This and the preceding sentence are omitted in the French edition.—*Translator.*

² "Zu dem groben Klotz gehöte manchmal ein grober Keil." Also "*harter Keil*." An old Roman saying. A French equivalent is *à vilain, vilain et d'en*. —*Translator.*

³ "Durch diesen barocken Felsenstil, *i.e.*, barbaric, rocky

a religious Danton, a preacher of the Mountain, who from its height hurls down varied blocks of words on the heads of his foes.

Far more remarkable and significant than his prose writings are Luther's poems, or the songs which sprung from his soul in battle and suffering. They often seem like a flower growing on a rock or a moon-ray quivering on a rowing lake. Luther loved music; he even wrote a treatise on it; hence his songs are remarkably melodious. And in this respect the name of the Swan of Eisleben was appropriate to him. But he was anything but a gentle swan in many songs, in which he fired the souls of his followers and inspired himself to the wildest joy of battle. That was a defiant war-song indeed with which he and his companions entered Worms. The old cathedral trembled at the new sounds, and the ravens were terrified in their obscure nests in the towers. That song, which was the Marseilles Hymn of the Reformation, has preserved its power of inspiration to this day, and we perhaps shall use the old mail-clad words ere long for other battles—

style. The baroque style is properly that of the architecture of the Regency and later. It is also often applied to grotesque yet tasteless art, which showed itself in "gröttoes." The word itself is also said to be derived from *perule*, in reference to the wigs which were worn of such extravagant dimensions when it prevailed.—*Translator*.

I have shown how much we owe to our dear Dr. Martin Luther for the freedom of thought which the new literature needed for its development. I have also shown how he shaped the Word in which this new literature could express itself. I have now only to add that he himself began this literature—that it and in fact our pure literature begins with Luther—that his religious songs are the first appearances in it of any importance—and already announce the character which it was to assume. He who will speak of modern German literature must begin with Luther, and not with a Nuremberg cockney citizen² named

¹ See my *Literature*, besides letters.

- *Schubert*, a good citizen. like John Calpin, enrolled in the city guards. The intimation is of honest stupidity, recalled what was associated once with the National Guards of Paris. To make the most of Luther, Heine is here guilty of the grossest injustice to Hans Sachs—an injustice which is the greater because Heine, of all men, must have appreciated the quaint humour and exquisite local and temporal colour of this writer, who reflects his age with rare fidelity. Equally superficial and misleading are his remarks to the effect that Luther created, entirely and alone, the German language, and that no sources of aid or inspiration whatever existed to his hand. This is the more to be regretted because, apart from these forced exaggerations, this sketch of Luther is one of the masterpieces of the

Hans Sachs, as is done by the dishonest envy of certain Romantic writers. Hans Sachs, the troubadour of the Honourable Guild of Shoemakers, whose master-song is only a silly, nonsensical parody of the earlier Minnelieder, and whose dramas are only a clumsy doltish travesty of the old mystery-plays—this pedantic jack-pudding, who painfully apes the free naïveté of the Middle Age, may perhaps be regarded as the last poet of the olden time, but by no means as the beginning or last of the new.¹ There is therefore no need of further proof ere I proceed to discuss in a decided manner the contrasts of our new literature with the elder.

If we consider German literature as it was before Luther, we find that —

I. Its material is like the life of the Middle Age itself, a mixture of two heterogeneous elements, which in a long struggle closed round each other so forcibly, that in the end they united; that is, the German nationality and the Indian-Gnostic, so-called Catholic Christianity.

— II. The treatment, or much rather the spirit of the treatment, in this older literature, is romantic.

— — — German language. He subsequently flatly contradicts himself as to this when speaking of Tauler and of Sachs.—*Translator.*

¹ Here the first book ends in the French version; that is to say, there are five and a half pages more in the German original.

The same is said abusively also of the material of that literature, as of all the developments of the Middle Age which resulted from the blending of the two elements mentioned, or German nationality and Catholic Christendom. For just as certain poets of the Middle Age treated Greek history and mythology quite romantically, so we can set forth mediæval manners and legends in classic form. The expressions classic and romantic depend, therefore, upon the spirit in which they are treated.¹ The treatment is classic when the form of that which is set forth is quite identical with the idea of the representer, as is the case in Greek works of art, where, in consequence of this identity, the greatest harmony is found between form and idea. But it is romantic when the form does not reveal the idea by identity, but lets the idea be guessed *parabolically*. I use the word *parabolic* here in preference to *symbolic*. Greek mythology had an array of forms of gods, of which every one, notwithstanding the identity of form and of idea, could, however, assume a symbolic meaning. But in this Greek religion only the forms of the gods were accurately determined or defined; everything else, such as their living and loving, was left to the will of the poet

¹ See further, as regards Heine's definition of this expression, the first book of the Romantic School, German edition of 1876, vol. vi. p. 27 — *Note by the German Publisher.*

to handle as he pleased. In the Christian religion, on the contrary, there are not such determined forms, but defined facts positively declared body events, and deeds into which the creating mind of man may inspire a parabolic meaning. It is said that Homer invented the gods of Greece, which is not true; they existed long before in distinct outlines, but he invented their histories. The artists of the Middle Age, on the other hand, never dared to invent or add anything, however trifling, to the historical part of the religion. The fall through sin, the becoming man, baptism and the crucifixion, were deeds not to be touched, on which there could be no making any thing into which the creative or poetic mind could attempt to put a parabolic meaning. In this parabolic spirit all the arts were treated in the Middle Age, and this treatment is romantic. Hence, in chivalry poetry that mystical generation, *die Welt*, is so shadowy; what they do is so dreamish. All is dusky-dim, as if lit by shooting fire-splendour; the idea is only intimated in the merest allusion; therefore we see a valuable form, such as is adapted to a spiritualistic culture. The idea is not, as with the Greeks, a harmony, as clear as daylight between form and idea, but very often the idea exceeds or over-tops the given form, and the

¹ *Allgemeine Welt, universality, here taken for "unk. human" is the best translation*

latter strives desperately or despairingly to equal it; the result being a bizarre and daring sublimity. Often, too, the form grows far over the head of the idea; a feeble, tiny thought drags and trails itself about in a colossal form and we see the grotesque—always at least deformity.

III. The general character of that literature was that, in all its products, the same firm and confident faith showed itself which then prevailed in all worldly as well as spiritual things. All the views or opinions of the time were based on authority; the poet wandered with the easy confidence of a mule along by the abyss of doubt, and there prevailed in his works a daring repose, a happy confidence, such as at a later time became impossible when the culminating point of those authorities or the authority of the Pope was broken, and everything else fell after it. The poems of the Middle Age have therefore all the same character; they do not seem as if one man, but as if the whole race had composed them; they are objective, epic, and naive.

In the literature which sprung up with Luther we find directly to the contrary that—

I. Its material, or the stuff which it treats, is the field of the interests of the Reformation and views as to the old order of things. To the new spirit of the time, that mixed faith which sprung up from the two elements before mentioned, that

is, German nationality and Indian-Gnostic Christianity, is entirely repulsive; it regards the latter as heathen idolatry, and it will have in its place the true religion of the Jewish-deistic Bible. A new order of things formed itself; the spirit made discoveries which promoted the well-being of material man by the development of industry and progress of philosophy; Spiritualism became discredited in public opinion; the Third Estate raised itself; the Revolution began to growl and roar in hearts and heads, and whatever the age felt and thought and wanted and would have, was spoken out, and that is the material of modern literature.

II. The spirit of treatment is no longer romantic, but classic. From the revival of ancient literature there spread all over Europe a genial enthusiasm for Greek and Roman authors, and the learned, who were the only ones who then wrote, sought to make the spirit of classical antiquity their own. If they could not attain, like the Greeks, to a harmony of form and idea, they clung all the more strongly to the externals of Greek treatment; they arranged all according to Greek precept into classes; they refrained from every romantic extravagance, and in this regard we call them classic.

III. The general character of modern literature lies in this, that individuality and scepticism now prevail. Authorities are overthrown, reason is

GERMANY TILL THE TIME OF LUTHER. 67

now the only lamp of man, and his own conscience his only staff in the dark mazes of life. Man sits alone face to face with his Creator, and sings him his song. Therefore this literature begins with hymns. But even later, when it became worldly, there ruled in it the deepest self-consciousness, the feeling of personality. Poetry is now no longer objective, epic, and naive, but subjective, lyrical, and reflecting.

FIRST PART.—BOOK SECOND.

FROM LUTHER TO KANT.

IN the foregoing book we have treated of the great religious revolution which was represented by Martin Luther in Germany. Now we have to speak of the philosophical revolution which came from it, and which is, in fact, the last result of Protestantism.

But before relating how this revolution was caused by Immanuel Kant, we must discuss more in detail the philosophical precedents in other countries, the meaning and significance of Spinoza, the result of the philosophy of Leibnitz, the mutual relations of this philosophy and religion, their irritations and discords; and we must constantly bear in mind those questions of philosophy to which we attribute a social significance, and whose solution concurs with that of religion.

This is now the question of the nature of God. "God is the beginning and end of all wisdom," say the believers in their humility, and

the philosopher, in all the pride of his knowledge, must agree with them as to this pious utterance.

It was not Bacon, as is generally taught, but René Descartes who was the father of the new philosophy, and we shall clearly show here the German philosophy descended from him.¹

René Descartes was a Frenchman, and here the glory of the beginning belongs to great France. But great France, the noisy, agitated, loquacious land of the French, was never a fit soil for philosophy, and perhaps never will be; and as René Descartes felt this, he went to Holland, to the calm and silent land of *trek-schuyten* and Dutchmen, and there wrote his philosophical works. It was only there that he could free his soul from traditional formalism and construct an entire philosophy from pure thoughts, borrowed neither from faith nor empiricism,² as since exacted from every true philosophy. Only there could he so deeply sink into the

¹ Descartes was truly enough the father of modern metaphysical philosophy, beyond which Heine never advanced; but Bacon's was that of induction, the basis of evolution, which has been developed by Darwin and his school.—*Translator*.

² *Empiric*. The philosophy based on sensation or experience, *e.g.*, that of Locke. The term in the sense of quackery and superstition came from medical misuse. Thus the "Empiric Medicine" of Marcellus Burdigalensis of the fourth century included charms and incantations to cure diseases, the author intending to assert by his title that he had tested them experimentally.—*Translator*.

abysses of thought as to find in its lowest depths of self-consciousness and confirm by thought that self-consciousness in the world-famed saying, *Cogito, ergo sum.*

Perhaps Descartes could not have then dared to teach, except in Holland, a philosophy which was at most open war with all the traditions of the past. The honour belongs to him to have founded the autonomy of philosophy; this no longer needed permission to think from theology, and it could henceforth place itself by the side of the latter as an independent equal. I do not say oppose itself, for the principle then prevailed that the truths to which we arrive through philosophy are in the end the same as those which are revealed by religion. The Schoolmen, as I have before remarked, not only yielded supremacy to religion over philosophy, but declared that the latter was an idle game and mere battling with words when it came into contention with religious dogmas. The main thing with them was to express their thoughts, no matter under what conditions. They said, "Once one is one." and proved it, but added, smiling, that it was again an error of human reason, which always goes wrong when it comes into contradiction with the decrees of oecumenic councils, that once one is three, and that is the real truth, as was long since revealed to us in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy

Ghost! The Schoolmen formed in secret a philosophic opposition to the Church, but in public they pretended the utmost deference to it; in many cases they fought for it; in grand processions they paraded in its train, as did the French deputies of the Opposition in the solemnities of the Restoration.

This comedy of the Schoolmen lasted more than six centuries, becoming all the time more trifling. By destroying Scholasticism Descartes also destroyed the superannuated opposition of the Middle Age. The old brooms had been worn to stumps by long sweeping; too much rubbish and dust stuck to them, and a new world wanted new brooms. After every revolution the hitherto opposition must resign, else there will be great follies. We have experienced this. At that time it was not the Catholic Church so much as its old opponents, the rearguard of the Schoolmen, who first rose against the Cartesian philosophy. The Pope did not forbid it till 1663.

I may assume that Frenchmen have an all-sufficient knowledge of the philosophy of their great countryman, and therefore need not show how the most opposing doctrines could take from it necessary material. I here speak of Idealism and Materialism.

As writers generally, especially in France, speak of these two doctrines by the names of

Spiritualism and Sensualism, and as I use both terms in another sense, I must here, to avoid confusion of ideas, discuss the expressions more accurately.

Since the earliest times there have been two opposite opinions or views as to the nature of human thought—that is, as to the final or deepest base of human knowledge, or the origin of ideas. It is maintained on one side that we get our ideas only from without, that our mind is only an empty receptacle in which the perceptions taken in from the senses work themselves up, very much like the food in our stomach. To use a better simile, these people regard our mind as a *tabula rasa*, on which experience afterwards writes every day something new, according to certain laws of writing.

Others, of different views, declare that ideas are innate or born in man; that the human mind is the first or primitive seat of ideas, and that the world without, experience, and the intermediary senses bring us only to a knowledge of that which was already in the soul, and wake up the slumbering ideas which were already there.

The first view has been called Sensualism, and often Empiricism, the latter Spiritualism and Rationalism. From this, misunderstandings could readily arise, since, as I have shown in the previous book, they have been employed to indi-

cate those two social systems which show themselves in all the manifestations of life. We will leave the name Spiritualism to that fanatical arrogance of the spirit which, striving for self-glorification, endeavours to trample on, or at least vilify matters, and we abandon the term Sensualism to the opposition which, on the contrary aims at a rehabilitation of matter, and vindicates the inalienable rights of the senses, without gainsaying the rights of the spirit, or even its supremacy.

These two systems have been opposed since men began to think, for there have always been men of imperfect capacities for enjoyment, of crippled senses and bruised flesh, who find all the grapes sour in this garden of God, who see the decoying serpent by every tree of Paradise, and seek their triumph in asceticism and their pleasure in pain. On the contrary, there are also and ever with us well-grown, bodily-proud natures, who like to hold their heads high; all the stars and roses smile sympathetically with them; they love to listen to the melodies of the nightingale and of Rossini they love the beautiful Gluck and Titian's flesh and to the dull fellow who hangs his head and to whom all such things are an abomination they reply in the words of Shakespeare's fool, "Thinkest thou because thou art virtuous there shall be no more cakes and ale?" To these two social

systems I leave the names of Spiritualism and Sensualism.¹

On the other hand, I give to philosophical opinions on the nature of our knowledge the names Idealism and Materialism, and indicate by the first the doctrine of innate ideas or ideas *à priori*, and by the other the theory of knowledge through the senses, or that of ideas *à posteriori*.

It is a very significant fact that the idealistic side of the Cartesian philosophy never had any success in France. Several distinguished Jansenists followed this course for a while, but they soon lost themselves in Christian Spiritualism. Perhaps it was this circumstance which discredited Idealism in France. The people divine by instinct whom they need to fulfil their mission. The French were already well on their way to that political revolution which broke out at the end of the eighteenth century, and for which they had need of an axe, and of a material philosophy not less cold and cutting. Christian Spiritualism was a fellow-warrior in the ranks of the enemy, and Sensualism was therefore their natural ally. As

¹ All of the preceding passage is omitted in the French version, and the German publisher informs us that Heine himself had stricken it out of the original MS., probably in haste, because the same quotation from Shakespeare is repeated in another place. As for the quotation, Heine gives it as follows: "Narr, meinst du, weil du tugendhaft bist, solle es keinen süssen Sekt und keine Torten auf dieser Welt geben"—*Translator*

the French Sensualists were generally Materialists, the error rose that Sensualism proceeded only from Materialism. But it can develop itself just as well as a result of Pantheism, and then it has a beautiful and commanding form. But we will not deny to French Materialism its dues for service rendered. It was an admirable antidote or counter-poison against the evil of the past, a desperate remedy for a desperate disease, mercury for an infected race. The French philosophers had chosen John Locke for their master; he was the saviour whom they required. His essay on the Human Understanding was their evangel, and they swore by it. John Locke had been in the school of Descartes, and had learned from him all that an Englishman can learn,—mechanics, analysis, combination, construction, and calculation. But one thing he never could understand, which was innate ideas. Therefore he perfected the theory that we obtain our knowledge from without by experience. He made of the human soul a kind of calculating box; the whole man became an English machine. This is also applicable to man as the scholars of Locke constructed him; but though they differ among themselves by different names, they are all afraid of the final results of their leading principle, and the disciples of Condillac are horrified when classed with Helvetius, or even Holbach, or perhaps at last with a La Metrie. However, it is inevitable, and

I must characterise the French philosophers of the eighteenth century and their followers of to-day, one and all, as Materialists. *L'homme machine* is the most consequent book of French philosophy, and its title indicates the final conclusion of its view of all things.

These Materialists were in the main deists, for a machine presupposes a mechanic, and it pertains to the highest perfection of the former that it recognises and esteems the technical knowledge of such an artist, be it in its own construction or in that of other works.

Materialism has fulfilled its mission in France. Perhaps it is now perfecting the same work in England, and the revolutionary parties, especially the Benthamites, the preachers of utility, are based on Locke. These are strong minds who have grasped the right lever wherewith to move John Bull. John Bull is a born Materialist, and his Christian Spiritualism is for the greater part traditional hypocrisy, or only material or sensual narrow-mindedness;¹ his flesh yields because the spirit comes not to his aid. It is different in Germany, and the German revolutionaries err if they believe that a material philosophy will favour their aims. Nor will any general revolu-

¹ *Materielle Bornstheit* In the French version, *une resig nation stupide* The four following paragraphs are wanting in the French.—*Translator*

tion be possible there so long as its principles are not deduced from a more popular, more religious, and more German philosophy, and made predominant by its power. What philosophy is this? That we will discuss candidly later. I say candidly, for I also expect that Germans will read these pages.

Germany has always manifested an antipathy for Materialism, and was therefore for a century and a half the real theatre of Idealism. Germans also sought the school of Descartes, and his greatest scholar was named Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz. As Locke developed the materialistic, so Leibnitz pursued the idealistic direction of the master. We find in him, expressed most determinedly, the theory of innate ideas. He opposed Locke in his *Nouveaux Essais sur l'Entendement Humain*. With Leibnitz arose great zeal for philosophic study in Germany. He woke German souls and led them in new ways. Whether it was the innate gentleness or the religious feeling which inspired him, his works reconciled the most revolted minds with their boldness, and the effect was enormous. The boldness of this philosopher is specially shown in his doctrine of monads, one of the most remarkable hypotheses which ever sprung from the head of a philosopher. And it is also the best which he produced, for there was foreshadowed in it the knowledge of the most important laws which

our present philosophy has produced. The doctrine of monads was perhaps only an awkward formulating of the same law which is now declared by natural philosophers in better formulas. I should here, instead of the word "law," only use that of formula, for Newton is right when he remarks that what we call law does not really exist in Nature, and that those are only formulas which come to the aid of our power of comprehension¹ to explain a series of phenomena in Nature. The *Theodicea* is in Germany the most discussed of all the works of Leibnitz, and yet it is his weakest. This book, as well as certain others in which the religious feeling of Leibnitz expresses itself, attracted to him many a slander, many a bitter misconception. His enemies accused him of the extreme of amiable weak-mindedness; his friends, defending him, made him out a crafty hypocrite. The character of Leibnitz was for a long time a subject of controversy among us. The best natured have never been able to free him from the reproach of duplicity. He was most reviled by the free-thinkers and enlighteners. How could they forgive a philosopher who had defended the Trinity, eternal punishment in hell, and even the divinity of Christ? Their toleration did not stretch so far. And yet

¹ *Faßungskraft*. In the French version *intelligence*. Literally power of grasping

Leibnitz was neither a knave nor a fool, and from his harmonious heights he could well defend all Christianity. I say all Christianity, for he defended it against semi-Christianity. He pointed out the consistency of the orthodox in contrast to the half-way in completeness of their opponents. More he did not seek. And he was on that point of indifference from which the most different systems only seem to be different sides of the same truth. Schelling subsequently recognised this point of indifference, and Hegel gave it scientific foundation as a system of systems. It was in this spirit that Leibnitz occupied himself with a harmony between Plato and Aristotle, a problem which has been proposed to us many times of later years. Has it been solved?

No, in truth, no! For this problem is nothing else than an adjustment of the strife between Idealism and Materialism. Plato is thoroughly Idealist, and only knows innate or rather connate ideas.¹ Man brings his ideas with him to the world, and when he becomes conscious of them, they seem to him like memories of an earlier existence. Hence the vagueness and mysticism of Plato, who only remembers more or less distinctly. With Aristotle, on the contrary, all is clear, significant, and certain, because his experi-

¹ "Oder vielmehr mitgeborene Ideen." This is wanting in the French version.—*Translator*

ences do not reveal themselves in him in relation to a previous life, for he draws everything from experience, and knows how to classify everything most accurately. Therefore he has always been the model for all empirical philosophers, who cannot sufficiently praise God for making him the tutor of Alexander, through whose conquests he had so many opportunities to advance science, and that his victorious pupil gave him so many thousand talents for zoological purposes. No doubt the old master expended all the money conscientiously, and dissected, for it, an honourable amount of mammaliæ, stuffed sufficient birds, and made in so doing the most important observations; but the great animal whom he had always before his eyes, whom he himself had trained, and who was far more remarkable than all the menagerie of all the world in those days, he passed by unexamined. In fact, he left us without any knowledge as to the nature of that young king, at whose life and deeds we are always amazed as if at miracles and problems. Who was Alexander? What did he want? Was he a madman or a god? As yet we do not know. Aristotle, however, gives all the better information as to Babylonian monkeys,¹ Indian parrots, and Greek tragedies, which latter he also cut up.

¹ Assyrian quadrupeds in the latest French version

Plato and Aristotle! they are not only two systems, but the types of two different kinds of human nature, which, since ages beyond the mind's grasp, under all forms or disguises, have always been more or less opposed. So they fought all through the Middle Age till this our time, and this battle is the most significant summary of Christian Church history. Plato and Aristotle are always discussed under other names. Visionary, mystical, Platonic souls have revealed unto them from the depths of the soul, or of feeling, Christian ideas and corresponding symbols. Practical, classifying, Aristotelian natures form from these ideas and symbols a fixed system, a dogmatic, and a cultus. The Church at last embraced both these natures of men, one entering the camp of the secular clergy, and the other that of monasticism, but who still kept up a constant feud. The same antagonism manifested itself in the Protestant Church, in which the division between pietists and orthodox corresponds to a certain degree to that between Catholic mystics and dogmatics. The Protestant pietists are mystics without imagination, and the Protestant orthodox are dogmatics without intelligence or wit.

We find these two Protestant parties engaged in bitter strife in the time of Leibnitz, and his philosophy intervened in it later, when Christian

Wolf mastered it, adapted it to the wants of the time, and, what was of the most importance, brought it forth in German. But before we speak further of this pupil of Leibnitz, of the result of his efforts, and of the later destinies of Lutheranism, we must mention the man of Providence who had developed himself at the same time with Locke and Leibnitz in the school of Descartes, who was long regarded with hate and scorn, and despite it rose in our days to general spiritual supremacy.

I speak of Benedict Spinoza.

A great genius forms himself on another great genius less by assimilation than by friction. One diamond grinds another. So the philosophy of Descartes by no means produced that of Spinoza, but only aided its development. Hence we find in the pupil the method of the master, which is a great gain; and then we find in Spinoza, as in Descartes, the system of demonstration taken from mathematics, which is a great defect. The mathematical form gives to Spinoza a forbidding exterior. But it is the hard shell of the almond, for which the kernel is all the sweeter. In reading Spinoza, we are seized by a feeling as when contemplating Nature in her grandest aspects of life-inspired repose, a forest of thoughts, high as heaven, whose blooming summits are in wavy motion, while their immovable trunks are deep-

rooted in earth. There is a certain *air* in the writings of Spinoza which is inexplicable; we are breathed on as by the breezes of the future. The spirit of the Hebrew prophets, it may be, rested on their remote descendant. There is in him a solemn earnestness, a self-conscious pride, a *grandezza* of thought which also seems to be an inheritance; for Spinoza belonged to those families of martyrs who were formerly driven by Most Catholic kings from Spain; to which add the patience of the Hollander, which is as perfectly manifested in all the life of the man as it is in his writings.

It is proved that the life of Spinoza was as free from every fault and pure and spotless as that of his divine cousin Jesus Christ. Like the latter, he too struggled for his doctrine; like him, he bore the crown of thorns. Wherever a great soul speaks out its thoughts, is Golgotha.

Dear reader, should you ever go to Amsterdam, let your guide show you the Spanish synagogue. It is a fine building; its roof rests on four colossal pillars, and in the midst is the pulpit where the curse of excommunication was uttered against the scorner of Mosaic law, the Hidalgo Don Benedict de Spinoza.¹ On such an occasion a ram's horn,

¹ Hidalgo Don Benedict de Spinoza sounds sufficiently strange; but to the revolutionary Heine the very shadowy title of the poor scholar was a great matter of envy and admiration.

called the *schofar*, is blown. There must be something horrible connected with this horn. For, as I have read in the life of Solomon Maimond, the Rabbi of Altona once visited him—the pupil of Kant—to bring him back to the old faith, and as Maimond obstinately persisted in his philosophic heresy, he became threatening and produced a *schofar* with the darkly significant words, “Do you know what *that* is?” And when the Kantian calmly replied, “Yes, it is a goat’s horn,” the Rabbi in horror fell flat on his back.

With this horn the excommunication of Spinoza was accompanied; he was solemnly expelled from the community of Israel, and declared to be unworthy henceforth to bear the name of Jew. His Christian enemies were magnanimous enough to allow him this, but the Jews, the Swiss guard of deism, were implacable, and the place is still shown before the Spanish synagogue in Amsterdam where they once endeavoured to murder him with their long daggers.

I could not refrain from specially calling attention to such personal misadventures of the man, for he was formed not only by lessons of learning, but those of life. Herein he differs from most philosophers, and in his writings we recognise its direct influences. Theology was not merely a branch of learning for him, nor politics, which he had also learned practically. The father of his

betrothed had been hung for political offences in the Netherlands. And in no place in the world are people as badly hung as they are in Holland. You have no idea of the interminable preparations and ceremonies observed there on such occasions. The culprit is bored to death before he is executed, and the spectator has most abundant and excessive time for reflection. I am convinced that Benedict Spinoza reflected a great deal over the execution of old Van Ende, and just as he had previously comprehended religion with its daggers, he now comprehended politics with its halters; information of which is given in his *Tractatus Politicus*.¹

I have only undertaken to show the way and manner in which philosophers are more or less allied, and I set forth their degrees of relationship and their inheritances. This philosophy of Spinoza, the third son of René Descartes, as he teaches in his chief work, the *Ethics*, is as remote from the Materialism of his brother Locke as from the Idealism of his brother Leibnitz. Spinoza does not torment himself analytically with the question as to the ultimate grounds of our knowledge; he gives us his great synthesis, his explanation of divinity.

¹ *Tractatus Theologico - Politicus*. This work is the principal source of modern German Rationalism. It has been well translated into English.—*Translator*.

Benedict Spinoza teaches that there is only one substance, which is God. This single substance is infinite and absolute. All finite substances are derived from it, are contained in it, rise and sink in it; they have only a relative, transitory, accidental existence. The absolute substance reveals itself to us as much under the form of infinite thought as that of endless extension. Both infinite thought and infinite extension are the two attributes of the absolute substance. We only know these two attributes, but God, the absolute substance, has perhaps other attributes which we do not know. "Non dico me Deum omnino cognoscere, sed me quædam ejus attributa, non autem omnia, neque maximam intelligere partem."

Only senselessness and malignity could apply to this doctrine the adjective atheistic.¹ No one has expressed himself more sublimely regarding the Divinity than Spinoza. Instead of saying that he denies God, one could rather declare that he denies man. All finite things are to him only *modi* of the infinite substance. All finite things are contained in God; the human soul is only a

¹ Heine, who was not a very deep or learned metaphysician, forgets here that it all depends on the conception which we have of, or the definition which we may attach to, the words *substance*, *matter*, and *God*, or that Pantheism carried to its logical extreme is Atheism—that is, it ends with *natura naturans*.—*Translator*.

ray of the infinite thought; the human body is only an atom of the endless extension. God is the illimitable cause of both spirits and bodies, *natura naturans*.

In a letter to Madame Du Deffant, Voltaire shows himself quite enraptured with an idea of this lady, who had declared that all things which a man cannot know are surely of such a nature that it would be of no use to him to know them. I would apply that observation to that passage of Spinoza which I have above given in his own words, and according to which not only thought and extension are attributes of God, but perhaps others which are perhaps for us unknowable. What we cannot know has for us no value, at least from the social point of view, where the question is to reduce to practical form what has been known in the spirit. In our explanation of the being of God we have therefore regard only to those two recognisable attributes. And, then, after all the things which we call "attributes of God" are only different forms of our perception, and these different forms are identical in the absolute substance. Thought is finally only invisible extension, and extension is only visible thought. Here we find ourselves in the leading clause of the German philosophy of identity, which is not essentially different from that of Spinoza. Schelling may contend, on the contrary, that his philosophy is

different from that of Spinoza, that his is more of "a living blending of the ideal and real," and that it differs from Spinozism "as a perfect Greek statue differs from a stiff Egyptian mummy." I must still distinctly declare that Schelling in his earlier period, when he was as yet a philosopher, did not differ in the least from Spinoza. All he did was to get to the same philosophy by another road, as I show in another place, when I explain how Kant opened a new way, how Fichte followed him, and Schelling trod in his footsteps, and while wandering about lost in the forest shades of natural philosophy, he found himself standing at last face to face before the grand statue of Benedict Spinoza.

The recent philosophy of Nature has only this merit, that it has indicated with sharpest sagacity the eternal parallelism which reigns between spirit and matter. I say spirit and matter, using the expressions as synonymous for what Spinoza calls thought and extension. To a certain degree what our natural philosophers call spirit and nature, or the ideal and real, is quite the same.

I shall consequently indicate with the name *Pantheism* not so much the system as the manner in which Spinoza regarded it. In this latter the unity of God may be assumed as well as in deism. But the God of the Pantheists is in the world itself—not merely penetrated by his divinity, as St. Augustine once tried to explain it when he compared

God to a great lake and the world to a great sponge swimming in it and imbibing divinity. No, the world is not steeped and impregnated in God, but as identical with God. God, who is called a substance by Spinoza and the Absolute by German philosophers, is "all that which is;" he is matter as well as spirit; both are alike divine, and whoever insults holy matter sins even as he sins who sins against the Holy Ghost.

The God of the Pantheists differs also from that of the deists, because he is himself *in* the world, while the latter is quite out of, or, what is the same, *over* it. The God of the deists rules the world from above downwards, as if it were a separate establishment, but the deists differ among themselves as to the mode or manner of this rule. The Hebrews conceive God as a thundering tyrant, the Christians as a loving father; the pupils of Rousseau, or the whole Genevese school, imagine him as a clever artist who made the world much as their papa made his watches, and as connoisseurs they admire the work and praise the master on high.

To the deist, who consequently admits a God out of or above the world, the spirit only is holy, since he regards the latter as the divine breath with which the Creator of the world has inspired the human body, the work kneaded by his own hands from clay. The Jews, therefore, regarded

the body as something of small account, or as a miserable envelope of the *ruach hakodasch*, the holy breath or spirit, and to this alone they devoted their care, their reverence, their cult. They became through this peculiarly the people of the spirit, chaste, sober, serious, abstract, obstinate, inclined to martyrdom, and their sublimest form in all or flower is Jesus Christ. He is in the true sense of the word the incarnate spirit, and deeply significant is the beautiful relation that a pure virgin gave birth to him by conception from the Spirit.

But if the Jews treated the body with little respect, the Christians went still further on this road, and regarded it as something objectionable, bad, or as evil itself. We see, some centuries after the birth of Christ, a religion rise which is destined to eternally amaze mankind, and to compel the latest generations to an admiration of awe.¹ Yes, it is a great and holy religion, filled with infinite happiness, which would conquer for the spirit the most unconditional supremacy in this world. But this religion was just too sublime, too pure, entirely too good for this world, where its idea could only be set forth in theory, but

¹ "Welche ewig die Menschheit in Erstaunen setzen, und den spätesten Geschlechtern die schauerlichsten Bewunderung abtrotzen wird." The most considerate translation cannot remove from this passage its "puff and pleonasm"—*Translator*

never practically carried out. The attempt to realise this idea brought forth an infinite array of dazzling deeds, of which poets in every age will long sing and say. The effort to reduce the idea of Christianity to practice, as we, in fine, see, failed miserably, and this unfortunate effort has cost mankind incalculable sacrifices, and its melancholy result is our present social illness in all Europe. If, as many think, we live as yet in the youth of mankind, then Christianity belongs to the most extravagant of its college ideas, which do far more credit to its heart than to its head. Christianity abandoned all that was material and worldly to the hands of Cæsar and his Jewish attendants,¹ and contented itself with denying the supremacy of the one and defiling the others in public opinion. But lo! the hated sword and the despised money got the supreme power in the end, and the representatives of the spirit were obliged to enter into arrangement with them. Yes, and this agreement even became a solid alliance. Not only the Roman, but also the English, the Prussian, in short all privileged priests, have united with Cæsar and his consorts to oppress the people. But from this alliance will result the more rapid ruin of Spiritualism. Some priests have already perceived this, and to

¹ "Judischen Kammerknechte." In the French version *et aux banquiers talmudistes*

rescue religion they give themselves the aspect of renouncing that ruinous alliance and come over into our ranks.¹ They wear the red cap, they swear death and hatred to all kings, to the seven blood-drinkers; they cry for equality in earthly possessions, they curse despite Marat and Robespierre. Between us, if we look into them closely, we shall find that they read mass in the language of Jacobinism, and as they once brought to Cæsar poison in the host, so they now bring to the people their hosts hidden in revolutionary poison, for they know that we love such deadly stuff.

Yet all your weary efforts are in vain. Humanity is sated and disgusted with all kinds of sacramental wafers, and longs for more nourishing food, for real bread and beautiful flesh. Humanity smiles pityingly at those youthful ideals which with all its efforts it could never realise, and it is becoming manly and maturely practical. Humanity now cherishes the system of worldly utility; it thinks seriously of a good, comfortable, citizen-like establishment, of sensible housekeeping, and of comfort for its old age. There is no longer any question as to leaving the sword in Cæsar's

¹ This is followed in the French version by the words "en s'affublant de nos couleurs." But all that which follows to the end of the paragraph or to the word "stuff" is wanting in it.—*Translator.*

hands or the money-bags to his deputies. The privileged honours will be torn from Cæsar, and industry be freed from the old disgrace.¹ The next question is how to recover our health, for we still feel very weak in our limbs—the holy vampires of the Middle Age have sucked so much of our life's blood; and then we must still offer to Matter such great expiatory sacrifices to atone for our ancient injuries to it. It would, perhaps, be even advisable should we institute festal games, and even manifest to matter still more extraordinary honours of reparation; for Christianity incapable of annihilating matter, has on all occasions degraded it, depreciating and reviling its noblest pleasures, and the senses being forced into hypocrisy, the result was lies and sin. We must clothe our women in new chemises and new thoughts, and fumigate all our feelings,² as if we had passed through a pestilence.

The immediate aim of all our most recent reforms or institutions is relatively the rehabilitation of matter, the restoration of it to its dignity, its moral recognition, its religious sanctification, its reconciliation with the spirit. Purusa will be again wedded to Prakriti. It was by their violent separation—as is so admirably and ingeni-

¹ The preceding two sentences are not given in the French version.

² In the French version *à la fumée des parfums*

ously represented in the Indian myth—that the great rent in all the world, or evil, originated.

• Do you now know what evil is in the world? The Spiritualists have always reproached us that according to the Pantheistic view all difference ceases between good and bad. But evil is partly the mad idea involved in their views of the world and partly the result of their own arrangement of the world.¹ According to their view of the world, matter is in and of itself evil, which is really a slander, and a terrible blasphemy of God. Matter never becomes evil except when it is forced to conspire in secret against the usurpations of the spirit, when the spirit has defiled or slandered it, and she has prostituted herself from self-contempt, or when she, with the hatred of despair, revenges herself on the spirit; and so evil is only a result of the spiritual arrangement of the world.

God is identical with the world. He manifests himself in plants, which lead without consciousness a cosmic-magnetic life. He manifests himself in plants, which, in their sensual dream-life, experience a more or less dull existence. But he manifests himself most grandly in man, who not only feels, but thinks at the same time, who knows

¹ Therefore, if there were no "Spiritualists," there could be no "evil" in the world. This passage is much admired by modern dynamiters.—*Translator*.

how to distinguish himself individually from objective Nature, and bears already in his reason the ideas which manifest themselves to him in the world of phenomena. In man, divinity attains to self-consciousness, and such self-consciousness reveals itself again through man. But this is not effected in and by the single individual, but in and by the totality of mankind, so that every man only comprehends and represents a portion of the God-universe, but all men grasp and set forth the whole God-universe in the idea and in reality. Every race has, perhaps, the mission to cognise and make known a certain portion of that God-universe—to understand a series of phenomena, to bring to perception a series of ideas, and to transmit the result to succeeding races, who have in turn the same mission. God is therefore the real hero of the world's history, which is naught save his constant thinking, his incessant action, his word, his deed; and one may say with justice of all mankind that it is an incarnation of God.¹

It is an error to suppose that this religion of Pantheism leads men to indifference. On the contrary, the knowledge of his divinity will inspire man to manifest it, and from this point the

¹ This *abrégé* of the Schelling-Oken natural philosophy is suggestive in expression of the influence of the *Geschichte der Seele* of Schubart, whom Heine probably knew in Munich.—*Translator.*

true great deeds of true heroism will glorify the earth.

• The political revolution which bases itself on the principles of French Materialism will find no opponents in the Pantheists, but allies, and allies who have drawn their convictions from a deeper source or from a religious synthesis. We promote the well-being of the material, the material prosperity of the peoples, not because we, like the Materialists, despise the spirit, but because we know that the divinity of man proclaims itself even in his bodily appearance, and misery destroys or makes vile the body, the image of God, the spirit thereby utterly perishing. The great word of the revolution which St. Just pronounced, "*Le pain est le droit du peuple*" (bread is the people's right), is according to us, "*Le pain est le droit divin de l'homme*" (bread is man's divine right¹). We do not contend for the human, but for the divine rights of man. In this and in many other things we differ from the men of the Revolution. We will not be *sans culottes*, nor frugal citizens, nor economical small presidents. We found a democracy of equally lordly, equally holy, and equally happy gods. You demand simple costumes, austere manners, and cheap unseasoned pleasures; we, on

¹ "Somebody will pay for it," said Mr Wilkins Micawber. St. Just and Heine have inadvertently omitted to explain how all this bread is to be paid for or by whom.—*Translator*.

the contrary, demand nectar and ambrosia, purple garments, costly perfumes, luxury and splendour, dances of laughing nymphs, music and comedies. Be not angered, O virtuous republicans! To your censuring reproaches we reply what the fool in Shakespeare has already said, "Dost thou think because thou art virtuous there shall be no more cakes and ale?"

The Saint-Simonians understood and wanted something of the kind, but they stood on an unfavourable soil, and the Materialism which surrounded suppressed them. They were better understood in Germany, for Germany is the most propitious soil for Pantheism; it is the religion of our greatest thinkers and best artists, and deism, as I shall explain in another place, has there long perished in theory. It maintains itself there, like many other things, only among the unthinking masses, without reasonable warrant.¹ It is not said, but every one knows, that Pantheism is the public secret in Germany. In fact, we have outgrown deism. We are free, and do not want a thundering tyrant; we are grown-up, and require no fatherly care. Nor are we the bungled work of a great mechanic. Deism is a religion for slaves, for children, for Genevese, for watch-makers.

¹ This passage is wanting in the French version.
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Pantheism is the secret religion of Germany, and that it would come to that was foreseen fifty years ago by those German writers who warred so vigorously on Spinoza. The most furious of these foes was Doctor Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, who sometimes has the honour shown him of being classed among German philosophers. He was nothing but a quarrelsome sneak, who dressed himself in the cloak of philosophy, and stealing in among philosophers, first whimpered a great deal about his love and tender heart, and then burst out into abuse of reason. His eternal refrain ever was that philosophy or knowledge by reason is mere delusion, that reason does not know herself to what she leads, but conducts man into a dark labyrinth of error and contradiction, and that Faith is the only sure guide. The mole! he did not see that reason, like the eternal sun, which, while it wanders high in heaven, lightens its path with its own glorious rays. Nothing can be compared to the pious genial hatred of little Jacobi for great Spinoza.

It is worth observing that the most different parties made war on Spinoza. They form an army whose varied contrasts are very amusing. Side by side with a swarm of white and black Capuchins, with crosses and smoking censers, marches the phalanx of Encyclopædists, who are also enraged at this *penseur téméraire*. By the Rabbi of the

synagogue of Amsterdam, who sounds the signal of attack on his ram's horn of faith, trips Arouet de Voltaire, who trills on his flageolet or piccolo of persiflage for the benefit of deism; and in between whines and grumbles old-woman Jacobi, the sutler-wife of this army of religion.

Let us escape from the charivari, and returning from our pantheistic tour, refer again to the philosophy of Leibnitz, whose further fate in Germany remains to be told.

Leibnitz, as you know, had written his works in Latin or French. Christian Wolf was the excellent man who not only systematised the ideas of Leibnitz, but lectured on them in German. And yet his greatest merit did not consist in having put the ideas of Leibnitz into a compact system, and still less that he made them accessible in German to a larger public: his chief desert lies in this, that he invited us to philosophise in our native language. For as until Luther we only treated theology, so until Wolf we only discussed philosophy in Latin. The example of a few who had previously read in German remained without result, but the literary historian must reflect on them with special praise. Especially would I mention Johannes Tauler, a Dominican monk, who was born in the beginning of the fourteenth century by the Rhine, and who died, I believe, in 1361 at Strasburg. He was a

pious man, and belonged to those mystics whom I have characterised as the Platonic party of the Middle Age. In the last years of his life he renounced all pedantic obscurity, was not ashamed to preach in the humble tongue of the people, and those sermons which he wrote down, as well as the German translations of some of his earlier Latin preachings, belong to the monuments of the German language.¹ For even so early as this it shows itself not only adapted to metaphysical discussion, but far more fitted for it than Latin. This last, the language of the Romans, can never cast off its origin. It is a language of command for captains in the field, of decrees for ministers, a legal language for misers, a lapidary one for the Roman race as hard as stone. And it became the predestined tongue of Materialism. Though Christianity, with perfect Christian patience, tormented itself for more than a thousand years in trying to spiritualise this speech, it did not succeed, and when Johannes Tauler would sink his soul into the most terrible abyss of thought, and when his heart swelled with

¹ In the French version : *comptent parmi les monuments les plus remarquables de la langue allemande*. Such being the case, it is singular that our historian makes no mention of them whatever in his account of German literature before Luther. But Heine was predetermined to make a melodramatic departure from the great reformer and ignore all his predecessors — *Translator*.

intensest religious feelings, he was obliged to speak German. His language is like a mountain torrent which bursts out of a hard rock, wondrously impregnated with perfumes of unknown flowers and strange mysterious virtues of stones. But it was only in more recent times that the practical applicability of the German language to philosophy was observed. In no other could Nature so reveal her most occult work as in our dear and delightful mother-tongue. It was only on the mighty oak that the sacred mistletoe could grow.

This would be the place to mention Paracelsus, or, as he called himself, Theophrastus Paracelsus Bombastus von Hohenheim, for he wrote almost always in German. But I shall speak in another place of Paracelsus from a more important point of view.¹ His philosophy was what we call to-day natural philosophy, and this doctrine of Nature living with ideas, which agrees so mysteriously with the German mind, would have at that time fully developed itself among us, had not, by accidental influence, the lifeless, mechanical physics of the Cartesians usurped a general sway. Paracelsus was a great charlatan, and always wore a scarlet coat, breeches, stockings, and hat, and

¹ The contributions of Paracelsus to the German language, and the number of new words and expressions which he added to it, were very far from being unimportant.—*Translator*.

declared that he could make *homunculi*, or little men; at least he was in confidential relations with occult beings who dwell in different elements, but he was also one of the most profound natural philosophers, who, with the heart of a true German investigator, understood the pre-Christian popular faith or the German Pantheism, and what they did not know they shrewdly guessed.

I should really speak here also of Jacob Böhme, for he also employed the German language for philosophic demonstration, and has in this respect been highly praised. But I could never make up my mind to read him (I do not like to be made a fool of). I much suspect that the admirers of this mystic wish to mystify the multitude. As for what his works contain, St. Martin has given something of them in French. The English have also translated him. Charles I. had so high an opinion of this theosophical shoemaker that he himself sent a scholar to Görlitz to study him. This messenger was luckier than his master, for while the latter lost his head by Cromwell's axe, the former at Görlitz only lost his wits through Jacob Böhme's philosophy.

As I have stated, Christian Wolf first introduced with success the German language to philosophy. His lesser merit was his systematising and making popular the ideas of Leibnitz. Both have been greatly blamed, and we must

incidentally refer to the cause. His systematising was all mere show and sham, and the most important portion of the philosophy of Leibnitz was sacrificed to it—that is, the best part of the doctrine of Monads. Leibnitz, it is true, left behind him no systematic edifice, but only the ideas for one. It required a giant to put together the colossal squared stones and stupendous columns which a giant had quarried from the deepest caves of marble and magnificently hewn. Truly that would have been a grand temple! But Christian Wolf was of very humble stature, and could only master a portion of the materials, and of these he built a paltry little tabernacle of testimony, or an ark of the covenant of deism. Wolf's head was more of the encyclopædic than of the systematic order, and he only understood the unity of a doctrine under the form of completeness. He was satisfied with a certain panel or framework in which the panels were most admirably arranged, perfectly fitted, and provided with legible labels; so he gave us an *Encyclopædia of Philosophic Sciences*. That he, the descendant of Descartes, had inherited the grandfatherly form of mathematical demonstration is a matter of course. I have already censured this form as used by Spinoza. Through Wolf it caused much mischief. In the hands of his pupils it degene-

rated into an intolerable schematismus or classification, and to a ridiculous mania for demonstrating everything mathematically. Thus originated what is known as the Wolfian dogmatism. All deep investigation ceased, and a wearisome mania for clearness took its place. The Wolfian philosophy became more and more watery,¹ and ended by inundating all Germany. The traces of this deluge are still visible, and here and there on our highest seats of the Muses we may find old fossils of the Wolfian school.

Christian Wolf was born in 1679 in Breslau, and died in 1754 in Halle. His intellectual rule endured for half a century in Germany. We must specially refer to his relations to the theologians of those days, and shall thereby enlarge our contributions as to the destiny of Lutheranism.

In the whole history of the Church there is no portion so entangled or embroiled as the quarrels of the Protestant theologians since the Thirty Years' War. Only the subtle hair-splitting wranglings of the Byzantines are to be compared to them, and even the latter were not so wearisome, because great politically interesting court intrigues lurked behind them, while the Protestant pummelling and pugi-

¹ "La philosophie de Wolf devint toute limpide, ou plutôt aqueuse."—*French version.*

lism was generally based on the narrow pedantry of petty magistral pates and poor professors, the universities; especially of Tübingen, Wittenberg, Leipzig, and Halle; being the arenas of these theological battles. The two parties whom we have seen fighting in Catholic attire through the entire Middle Age, the Platonist and Aristotelian, have now changed costume and carry on the feud as before. Those are the pietists and orthodox, whom I have already mentioned, and whom I described as mystics without imagination and dogmatists without wit. Johannes Spener was the Scotus Erigena of Protestantism, and as the former founded Catholic mysticism by his translation of the forged Dionysius Areopagita, so the latter laid the basis of Protestant pietism by his collection of edifying tracts called *Colloquia Pietatis*, whence perhaps the name pietists came to be applied to his adherents. He was a pious man, honoured by his memory! A Berlin pietist, Mr. Franz Horn, has written a good biography of him. Spener's life sets forth a continued martyrdom for the Christian idea. He was in this respect superior to his adversaries, that he insisted on good works and piety, being far more a preacher of the spirit than of the letter. All his preaching and teaching was for his time admirable, for all theology, as it was taught at the universities mentioned, consisted only in narrow-minded dogmatics and hypercritical, captious pole-

mics. Biblical exegesis and Church history were entirely set aside.

• A pupil of Spener's, Hermann Franke, began to deliver lectures in Leipzig after the example and in the spirit of his master. He delivered them in German—a service which we always repay gratefully. His success aroused the envy of his colleagues, who in consequence made life bitter for our poor pietist. He had to quit the field and retire to Halle, where he taught Christianity by word and deed. His memory will there be ever green, for he is the founder of the Orphans' Asylum of Halle.

The university of Halle was soon filled with pietists, and they were called the Orphan Asylum party, a term which, by the way, still exists. Halle is also still the molehill or head-quarters of the pietists, and their quarrels with the Protestant Rationalists a few years ago raised a scandal which spread its foul odour through all Germany. Happy Frenchmen who heard nothing of it all! Even the existence of those evangelical clack-and-gossip journals, in which the pious fishwives of the Protestant Church lustily abuse one another, is unknown to you. Happy Frenchmen! who have no idea how maliciously, how pettily, how disgustingly our evangelical priests can slander one another! You know that I am no dependant on Catholicism. In my present religious convictions

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lives no longer the dogma, yet ever the *spirit*, of Protestantism.¹ I therefore always take part with the Protestant Church, yet I owe it to truth* to say that in the annals of Papistry I never found such detestably mean trash as in the *Berlin Evangelical Church Journal* when the scandal referred to became public. The most cowardly monkish malice, the pettiest intrigues of cloisters, are noble acts of benevolence compared to the deeds of Christian heroism which our Protestant orthodox and pietists practised against the hated

¹ In the French edition there is given, instead of this sentence, the following :—

“Le protestantisme fut pour moi plus qu’une religion, ce fut une mission ; et depuis quatorze ans, c’est pour ses intérêts que je combats contre les machinations des jésuites allemands. Plus tard, il est vrai, s’éteignit ma sympathie pour le dogme et je déclarai franchement, dans mes écrits, que tout mon protestantisme ne consistait plus que dans le fait d’être inscrit comme chrétien évangélique sur les registres de la communion luthérienne. . . . Mais une secrète prédilection pour la cause qui nous fit jadis combattre et souffrir demeure toujours dans notre cœur, et mes convictions religieuses d’aujourd’hui sont encore animées de l’esprit de protestantisme.”

It must be admitted that, however interesting or entertaining it may be to follow our author through the astonishing variety of Hebrew, Christian, Hellenic, Sentimental-Catholic, Pantheistic, Deistic, Naturalistic, Atheistic-Protestant opinions which he entertains, either consecutively or simultaneously, it is extremely difficult to understand what he ever did believe in. As the Scotchman said of the haggis, “There’s a vara great deal o’ fine confused feedin’ aboot it.” *Au fond*, Heine believed in anything which gave him an opportunity to say something clever.—*Translator*.

Rationalists. You Frenchmen have no idea of the hatred which is developed on such occasions. • The Germans are altogether more vindictive than the Latin races.¹

This comes because we are Idealists even in hating. We do not hate one another for external trifles, like you, as, for instance ruffled vanity, or an epigram, or a visiting-card not returned. No, we hate in our enemies the deepest, the most essential part in them—that is, thought itself. You French are frivolous and superficial, in love as in hate. We Germans hate fundamentally, utterly, and enduringly, for we are too honourable and too clumsy to revenge ourselves with rapid perfidies, and so hate to our last breath. “Oh, I know, Monsieur, what this German calm is,” said a lady lately, while she with staring eyes looked at me incredulously and in anxious fear.² “I know that you Germans use the same word for forgiving and poisoning.” And in fact she was right, for the word *Vergeben* means both.

¹ One of the sayings which, uttered by a great writer, obtained undeserved acceptance. Heine himself was indeed implacably vindictive, as is shown by his revenge on Platen. But to compare the German with the Italian or Spaniard, or the more vulgar class of Americans, in this respect, is to compare burning straw to red-hot steel

² “In dem sie mich mit gross geoffneten Augen unglaublich und beängstigt ansah.” This is given very differently in the French version as “en me regardant de tous ses yeux et d’un sourire incrédule”—*Translator*.

If I am not mistaken, the orthodox of Halle, in their conflict with the hermit-like pietists,¹ called to their aid the Wolfian philosophy; for religion, when it can no longer burn us alive, comes to us begging. But all our gifts bring her but little gain. The mathematical, demonstrative garment, wherewith Wolf had clothed poor Religion so lovingly, fitted her so badly that she felt still more cramped, and in this strait made herself still more ridiculous. The bad sewing burst everywhere, exposing her person, and it was especially the shameful part—original sin—which displayed itself in its most glaring nakedness. Here no logical fig-leaf availed.² Christian-Lutheran original sin and Leibnitz-Wolfian optimism are intolerable. The French persiflage of optimism did not much displease our orthodox. The wit of Voltaire came to the aid of naked original sin, but the German Pangloss had lost a great deal by the destruction of optimism, and sought long for a doctrine equally consoling, until the Hegelian utterance, “All which is, is reasonable,” brought him some consolation and amends.

¹ “Mit den eingesiedelten Pietisten,” from *ensiedeln*, to live as a hermit. In the French version these are called “les pétéistes *emigrés*,” the translator having confused *ensiedeln* with *ansiedeln*, to settle down as a colonist or immigrant.

² In the French version, “Les feuilles de vigne philosophiques n’y parent rien.” The shade of the fig-tree is, in this instance, superior to that of the vine.

But from the instant when a religion seeks support from philosophy, its ruin is inevitable. It seeks to defend itself and sinks even deeper into destruction. Religion, like every other form of absolutism, should be above justification. Prometheus is chained to the rock by the power of silence. Æschylus does not suffer power personified to speak a word; it must be silent. As soon as religion prints a reasoning catechism, or a political absolutism publishes an official newspaper, both come to an end. And therein is our triumph; we have involved our enemies in a discussion, and they must speak.

It is indeed not to be denied that religious as well as political absolutism has found very powerful organs to express their opinions. Yet let us not be afraid for that. If the Word lives, dwarfs may carry it; if it is dead, no giant can uphold it.¹

And since religion; as I have observed; sought assistance from philosophy, innumerable experiments were tried upon her by German savants. It was thought advisable to rejuvenate her, and to do this they went to work much after the manner of Medea in doing the same to King Æson. At first they opened her veins, and all the superstitious blood was very slowly extracted; or, to speak without a simile, an attempt was made to

¹ This paragraph is wanting in the French version — *Translator*.

take from Christianity its historical element, and only retain the moral portion. Thus they made of it a pure deism. Christ ceased to be an equal ruler with God; he was, so to speak, mediatised, and only found honourable recognition as a private person. His moral character was praised as being beyond all measure, and men could not find language to describe what an admirable person he was.¹ As for his miracles, people explained them by natural causes, or, better still, kept as quiet as possible regarding them. "Miracles," said some, "were needed in those ancient days of superstition, and an intelligent man who had any truth to announce used them as an advertisement." Those theologians who cut out everything historical from Christianity were called Rationalists, and against them was united all the wrath of the pietists as well as that of the orthodox, who from that time quarrelled less among themselves, and were indeed often allied; for what love could not effect, hate brought about—the mutual hatred of the Rationalists.²

This direction in the Protestant theology began with the tranquil Semler, whom you do not know, who attained an anxious eminence with the lucid

¹ "Welch 'em braver Mensch er gewesen sei."

² In the French version "*cette réforme de la théologie protestante*," the translator evidently believing that *Richtung*, direction, setting right as allied to correcting *eg*, *richten* to correct, also meant reform!—*Translator*.

Teller, of whom you are ignorant, and reached its summit with the shallow¹ Bahrdt, by wanting whose acquaintance you lose nothing. The most vehement impulses came from Berlin, where Frederick the Great and the bookseller Nicolai held sway.

As to the first, who was crowned Materialism itself, you are well instructed. You know that he wrote French verses, played the flute very well, won the battle of Rossbach, took a great deal of snuff, and only believed in cannon. Some of you have certainly visited Sansouci, and the old invalid soldier who is a castle-guard has shown you in the library the French novels which Frederick, when crown-prince, read in church-time, and which he had bound in black morocco to make his stern parent believe that he was reading a Lutheran hymn-book. You know this royal sage, whom you have called the Solomon of the North. France was the Ophir of this Solomon, whence he imported his poets and philosophers, for whom he had a great predilection, like that Solomon of the South, who, as you may read in the Book of Kings, chap. x, had brought to him from Ophir whole ship-loads of gold, ivory,

¹ "Mit dem seichten Bahrdt." In the French version "Bahrdt au front d'airain." *Seichtkopfig*, shallow brained. It is possible that some confusion of brain or head, and of *seiche* with *seigen*, "to refine metals," suggested this singular translation, which was, however, perfectly applicable to Bahrdt.

poets and philosophers.¹ Having such preference for foreign talent, Frederick the Great could not, of course, exercise any all too great influence on the German mind. He insulted, and, moreover, weakened German national feeling. The contempt with which he treated our literature may even now vex us, his descendants. With the exception of old Gellert, not one German man of letters ever received from him aught of his all-gracious good-will or favour. His interview with this poet is very curious.

If Frederick the Great mocked without supporting us, yet were we supported all the more by the bookseller Nicolai, which in no wise prevented us from mocking and deriding him. This man was all his life long unwearied in work for the good of his fatherland, sparing neither pains nor money wherever he hoped to do good, and yet there was never in Germany a person so cruelly, so inexorably, so crushingly ridiculed and abused as he was. And yet, though we, the later-born, know very well that old Nicolai, the friend of enlightenment, was perfectly right in the main, and though we are also perfectly aware that it was chiefly our own enemies, the obscurants, who

¹ In the French version the passage referred to is here quoted in Latin from the Vulgate, Kings, l. 1 22. "Classis regis per mare, cum classe Hiram semel per tres annos ibat, deferens inde aurum et argentum, et dentes elephantorum, et simias et pavos"

ridiculed him into his grave, still we cannot think of him with altogether serious faces. Old Nicolai sought to effect in Germany what philosophers had done in France, which was to make the past vanish from the minds of the people; also an admirable prefatory work, without which no radical revolution can take place. The trouble was lost, for he was not cut out for the work. The old ruins stood as yet far too firmly, the spectres of the past flitted out and mocked him, and then he grew furious and struck out blindly, and the lookers on laughed when the bats hissed and entangled themselves in his well-powdered peruke. And it sometimes happened that he mistook windmills for giants, and fought them, but it was far worse when he many times mistook real giants for mere windmills, as, for instance, a Wolfgang Goethe. Against his *Werther* he wrote a satire in which he most rudely perverted every meaning of the author. And yet he was right in the main, and if he did not understand what Goethe meant to express by *Werther*, he at least understood what its effect would be, the debilitating dreaminess, the feeble fanaticism, the fruitless sentimentalism which this romance brought forth, and which was in hostile contradiction with every healthy and reasonable sentiment, such as we really require. And in this Nicolai agreed perfectly with Lessing, who

wrote to one of his friends the following opinion as to Werther:—

“Do you not think that a brief cold conclusion would be advisable to prevent such a fiery production from doing more harm than good? A few hints as to how Werther became such an eccentric character, or how another youth whom Nature gifted in the same way could guard himself? Do you believe that a Greek or Roman youth would have taken his own life in such a manner and for such a cause? Certainly not. They knew how to guard themselves from the visionary follies of love, and in the time of Socrates they would have hardly forgiven a young country-maid such an ἐξ ἐρωτος κατοχη inspired by τι τολμαν παραφυσιν. To produce such petty-great, contemptibly valuable originals was reserved for a Christian education, which alone could transform a bodily need so beautifully into a spiritual perfection. Therefore, dear Goethe, add yet another chapter to conclude, and the more cynical the better.”

Friend Nicolai really published a *Werther* travestied according to these recommendations. In his version the hero is not killed, but only spattered with chicken's blood, with which the pistol had been charged. Werther is made ridiculous, lives, ~~he~~ marries Charlotte—in fact,

ends more tragically than in the original by Goethe.¹

The journal which Nicolai founded was called *Die Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek*, or the "Universal German Library," in which he and his friends waged war on superstition, Jesuits, court-lackeys, and the like, with great vigour. It cannot be denied that many a blow meant for absurd belief fell by sad fate on poetry itself. Thus Nicolai fought against the liking for old German popular ballads.² But, in fact, he was right here too, for, with many a merit, those songs had innumerable associations which were not in keeping with the age, and those old sounds, "the call to the cows" of the Middle Ages,³ might easily entice popular feeling back into the cattle-pen of the past. He sought, like Ulysses, to stop the ears of his companions, so that they might not hear the song of the sirens, and never heeded that they thereby also became deaf to the notes of the nightingale. So that the field of the present could be radically cleared of weeds, the practical man cared little if the

¹ It is a remarkable coincidence that in an American Algonkin legend, a sorcerer by the same trick makes people believe that he has killed himself, and then returned to life — *Translator*.

² As did Cobbett, who enumerates them among the incomprehensible or absurd follies of collectors.

³ *Kuhreigen*, the *canç des vaches*, which so fascinates the Swiss.

flowers went with them. Against this the party of flowers and of nightingales, and therewith all else belonging to it, such as beauty, wit, grace, and gaiety, rose in enmity and poor Nicolai was laid low.

To-day matters are changed in Germany, and the party of flowers and nightingales is closely connected with the Revolution. The future is ours, and the day-spring of victory is already dawning. Should this bright beautiful day ever pour its light over our whole country, then we will certainly think of thee, old Nicolai, poor martyr of reason! We will bear thy ashes to the German pantheon, the sarcophagus surrounded by a rejoicing triumphal procession, and accompanied by a chorus of musicians, among whose wind instruments there shall be none which hiss;¹ we will lay on thy coffin the most admirable of laurel crowns, and do our best not to laugh while doing so.

As I would give an idea of the philosophic and religious relations of that time, I must here mention those thinkers who were more or less actively associated with Nicolai, and at the same time formed a *juste milieu* between philosophy and literature. They had no settled system, but a settled and determined direction. They were like

¹ *Querpfefe*, i.e., *cross-pipes*. In English slang the word *quer* has become "queer," while cross is its synonyme.—*Translator*.

the English moralists in their style and their fundamental principles. They wrote without observing any scientifically strict form, and moral consciousness was the only source of their knowledge. Their tendency is altogether the same as that which we find among French philanthropists. In religion they were rationalists, cosmopolites in politics, in morals noble, virtuous men, severe as to themselves, and tolerant to others. As regards ability, Mendelssohn, Sulzer, Abt, Moritz, Garve, Engel, and Biester were the most distinguished among them. Of these, I prefer Moritz, who communicated much of value in experimental psychology. He was a man of charming naiveté, but was little understood by his friends. His biography is one of the most important records of his time. Mendelssohn has, however, among them all, pre-eminent social importance. He was the reformer of his co-religionists, the German Jews; he overthrew the authority of the Talmud, and founded pure Mosaic culture. This man, who was called by his contemporaries the German Socrates, and whom they admired for his nobility of soul and strength of intellect, was the son of a poor sacristan of the synagogue of Dessau. Over and above this defect of birth, Providence had loaded him with a humpback, as if to show the mob in rough fashion that men should be judged not by outer seeming, but by inner value. Or did Providence bestow it on

him with foresight, so that he might attribute to it much ill-treatment by the vulgar multitude, for which a wise man can easily find consolation ?

As Luther had overthrown the Popedom, so did Mendelssohn the Talmud, and that in the same manner, since he destroyed the tradition, proclaimed the Bible as the source of religion, and translated the most important portions of it. Thus he destroyed Jewish-Catholicism, as Luther had the Roman. In fact, the Talmud is the Catholicism of the Jews. It is a Gothic cathedral, which is indeed over-loaded with child-like grotesque ornament, yet it amazes us with its heaven-soaring giant-grandeur. It is a hierarchy of religious laws, which often treat of the drollest, most ridiculous subtleties, and yet they are so intelligently arranged over and through one another, sustaining and aiding mutually, and coincide with such tremendous logical force, that they constitute a formidable and colossal whole.

After the fall of Christian Catholicism, that of the Jews or the Talmud was also doomed. For the Talmud had then lost its meaning; it had served as a bulwark against Rome, and the Jews owe this to it, that by its aid they resisted Christian Rome as heroically as they had the Rome of Paganism. Not only did they resist—they conquered. The poor Rabbi of Nazareth, over whose dying head the heathen Roman wrote

the mocking words, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews,"—even this mock-king of the Jews, crowned with thorns, and clad with ironic purple, became at last the king of the Romans, and they had to kneel before him. As heathen Rome had been, so Christian Rome was conquered, and even made tributary. If you, dear reader, will go during the first days of any quarter to the Rue Lafitte, No. 15, Paris, you will there see before a high portal a heavy coach, from which will step a very weighty man. He will go upstairs into a little room, where sits a blonde young man, who is, however, older than he looks, yet in whose aristocratic, grand-seigneur-like nonchalance there is something as solid, as positive, as absolute as if he had all the money in the world in his pocket. And he really has all the money of this world in his pocket, and he is called Monsieur James de Rothschild, and the stout man is Monsieur Grimbaldi, ambassador of His Holiness the Pope, and he brings in his name the interest of the Roman loan—the Roman tribute.

What is the use of the Talmud now ?

Moses Mendelssohn, therefore, deserves great praise for overthrowing this Jewish Catholicism, at least in Germany. For whatever is superfluous is injurious. Though overthrowing the tradition, he endeavoured to strictly maintain the Mosaic ceremonial law as a religious duty. Was

it timidity or shrewdness? Was it a lingering melancholy love, which restrained him from laying destructive hands on objects which were holiest to his ancestors, and for which the blood and tears of so many martyrs had been shed? I do not think so. Like the monarchs of matter, so the sovereigns of the spirit must be impitiable as to family feelings; even on the throne of thought there should be no yielding to tender sentiments. I am therefore of the opinion that Moses Mendelssohn saw in pure Mosaism an institution which might serve deism as its last defence and final fort; for deism was his innermost faith and his deepest conviction. When his friend Lessing died, and was accused of having been a Spinozist, he defended him with the most restless zeal, and because of it grieved himself to death.

I have here mentioned for the second time a name which no German can utter without its being more or less re-echoed in his heart. For since Luther, Germany has brought forth no greater or better man than Gotthold Ephraim Lessing. The two are our pride and our joy. In these sad troubled times, we raise our eyes to their consoling images, and they nod to us a glorious promise. Yes, there will come the third man who will perfect what Luther begun, what Lessing continued, and what the Fatherland so much requires—the third liberator! I see already

shining from afar his golden armour gleaming through the imperial purple mantle, "even like the sun through morning's rosy glen."

Lessing had his effect like Luther in this, that he not only did something definite, but that while he moved the German people to their depths, he developed a healthy intellectual action by his criticism and polemics. He was the living *critic* of his time, and his whole life was polemics. This criticism manifested its influence in the remotest realms of thought and of feeling, in religion, science, and art, while his *polemic* conquered every foe and grew stronger with every victory. Lessing, as he himself confessed, needed strife for the proper development of his intellect. He was like the legendary Norseman, who inherited the talents, knowledge, and power of the men whom he killed in duels, and who was thus in time gifted with all possible advantages and virtues. It is intelligible enough that such a battle-loving Kempe¹ made not a little noise in calm, still Germany, wherein the Sabbath stillness was deeper even than that of to-day. The many were dumbfounded by his literary daring, but this stood him in good stead, for *oser!*—be bold!—is the secret of success in literature as

¹ *Kampe*. This is Low German for *Kampfer*, a warrior. The Norse *Kempe* was used in England till the fourteenth century, perhaps later. "With Kempes many a one."

well as in revolution or in love. All trembled before the sword of Lessing; no head was safe from him; in fact, he decapitated many from mere wantonness, and was then wicked enough to lift the head from the ground and show the public that it was hollow. Those whom he could not slay with the sword, he slew with the arrows of his wit.¹ His friends admired the coloured feathers in these arrows, his foes felt them in their hearts. The wit of Lessing was not at all like that *enjouement*, that *gaieté*, those sparkling sallies, such as are known here. It was no French greyhound who runs after his own shadow; it was much more like a great German tom-cat, which plays with the mouse before she strangles it

Yes, polemics were the joy of our Lessing, therefore he never deliberated long whether his opponent was worthy of him. So he by his war-

¹ In the French version, "celui que sa logique tranchante ne pouvait atteindre il le tuait avec les traits de son esprit." These passages are extremely characteristic of Heine, who far surpassed any modern, or indeed ancient author, excepting perhaps Carlyle, in admiring and desiring mere power for its own sake, and in regarding it as the *summum bonum* of the individual. The character of Lessing, as here described and praised for sheer wanton cruelty, is worse than that of the Red Indian who inflicts death with torture only on his enemies. But manners and morals have improved since Heine wrote, and a writer who, inspired by personal ill feeling or injured vanity, would hunt down a rival is now regarded, be his genius what it may, with little favour

fare preserved from oblivion many names who well deserved it. Round many a tiny writer did he spin the wittiest mockery and most precious humour, and they are preserved for eternity in the works of Lessing like insects in a lump of amber. By killing his enemies he made them immortal. Who among us would else have ever heard of that Klotz on whom Lessing lavished so much scorn and keen wit? The masses of rock which he cast on this poor antiquary and where-with he was crushed are now his indestructible monument

It is remarkable that this, the wittiest man of Germany, was also the most honourable. There is nothing equal to his love of truth. Lessing never made the least concession to lies, even when he by so doing could, in the usual fashion of the worldly-wise, aid in the victory of truth. He could do everything for truth except lie. As he himself once said, "The man who will present truth to us in all kinds of masks and paints may indeed be her pander, but never her lover."

That fine expression of Buffon, "Style is the man himself,"¹ is applicable to no one more than to Lessing. His manner of writing is entirely like his character, true, firm, without ornament, beautiful and imposing from indwelling strength.

¹ In the French version, "Le style est tout l'homme." It is generally cited as "Le style c'est l'homme"

His style is altogether like that of Roman architecture, the most perfect solidity with extreme simplicity; the sentences rest one on the other like squared stones, and as in the one the law of weight, so in the other that of logical consequence is the invisible power which binds and connects the whole. Therefore there are in his prose so few of the expletives and artistic turns which we use like mortar in constructing sentences; and still fewer are those caryatides of thought which you call *la belle phrase*.

That a man like Lessing could never be happy may easily be conceived; and even if he had not loved the truth, and even if he had not voluntarily defended it everywhere, he must still have been unhappy, because he was a man of genius. "Everything will be forgiven you," said of late a sighing poet, "wealth, illustrious birth, personal beauty, even talent—but there is no mercy for genius." Ah! and even if ill-will did not encounter it from without, genius would find in itself the enemy which destroys it. Therefore the history of great men is always a martyrology; when they did not suffer and make war for great humanity, they did it for their own greatness, for the great order of their being, for the un-Philistine, for their dislike of pompous vulgarity, the ridiculous troubles of their surroundings, a trouble which drives them naturally to extravagances—for example, to the

theatre, or even to the gambling-house, as happened to poor Lessing.¹

• Scandal could reproach him with nothing worse than this, and we learn from his biography that pretty comediennes seemed to him to be more amusing than Hamburg clergymen, and that silent cards were more entertaining than twaddling Wolfians.

It rends the heart to read how destiny denied to this man every joy, and how he was not even permitted to enjoy in domestic life rest from his daily conflicts. Once fate seemed to favour him, and gave him a beloved wife and a child; but this prosperity was like the sun-ray which falls on the wings of a bird as it flits by. His wife died in child-bed, the child also soon after birth, and regarding this he wrote to a friend the grimly-witty words:—

“My joy was but short, and I lost him unwillingly, this son! For he had so much intelligence—so much intelligence! Do not think that my few hours of paternity have made me a foolish monkey of a father.² I know what I am saying. Was it not intelligent that he so promptly perceived that things went badly in this

¹ In the French version “malaise qu’il porte facilement aux extravagances, par exemple, aux actrices ou au jeu, comme il arriva au pauvre Lessing”

² In allusion to the fable of the ape and her young.

world when he was drawn forth into it with iron pincers? Was it not clever of him to seize the first opportunity to escape from it? I wanted, for once to be happy like other men. But it went ill with me."

There was a misfortune of which Lessing never complained to his friends; this was his terrible isolation, his spiritual solitude. Some of his contemporaries loved him, none understood him. Mendelssohn, his best friend, defended him with zeal when he was accused of Spinozism. Defence and zeal were both as ridiculous as they were superfluous. Rest in thy grave, old Moses; thy Lessing was indeed on the way to that awful error, that lamentable misery of Spinozism, but the Highest, whose home is in heaven, saved him betimes. Be calm! thy Lessing was no Spinozist, as slander asserts; he died a good deist, like thee and Nicolai and Teller, and the Universal German Library.

Lessing was only the prophet who, grasping the meaning of the second Testament, set forth the third. I have called him the one who continued Luther, and it is really in this character that I must here discuss him. Of his influence and significance as to German art I shall speak anon. In this he not only by criticism but by example effected a healthy reform, and it is this side of his work which is most exalted and elucidated.

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We, however, regard him from another point of view, and his philosophic and theologic battles are for us of more importance than his *Dramaturgy* and his *Dramata*. The last, however, have, like all his writings, a social significance, and "Nathan the Sage" is in fact not only a good comedy, but also a philosophic-theological treatise in favour of pure deism. Art was for Lessing a tribune; and when he was cast out of the pulpit or the chair, then he leaped upon the stage, and there spoke more significantly than ever, and attracted more hearers.

I say that Lessing continued Luther. After Luther had freed us from tradition and raised the Bible to being the only source of Christianity, there sprung up, as already set forth, a stiff dry worship of the text, and the letter of the Bible ruled as tyrannically as tradition had before. Lessing contributed chiefly to deliverance from this tyrannic letter. And as Luther likewise was not the only one who fought tradition, so Lessing did not fight alone, but was the most vigorous against the letter. Here his war-cry sounded loudest; here he swung his axe most joyously, and it shone and slew. But here he was most closely pressed by the black bands, and in such stress he once cried—

"O sancta simplicitas! But I am not yet where the good man who cried this could do

naught else but cry it. (These were the words of Huss at the stake.) First let us be heard, first let us be judged by those who can and will hear and judge!

“Oh, that he could do it, he whom I would most gladly have for my judge—Luther!—thou great man misunderstood, and by none more than by the stubborn stupid, who, bearing thy slippers in hand, saunter crying aloud, yet all indifferent in the road which thou hast opened. Thou didst free us from the slavery of tradition; who will free us from the more intolerable yoke of the letter? Who will bring us at last a Christianity such as thou wouldst teach, such as Christ himself would teach?”

Yes, the letter, said Lessing, is the last crust of Christianity, and not till it is broken away can the spirit come forth. This spirit is, however, nothing else but what the Wolfian philosophy sought to demonstrate, what the philanthropists felt in their souls, what Mendelssohn found in Mosaism, what Freemasons sung and poets piped; in a word, what was then developing itself in every form in Germany—that is, pure deism.

Lessing died in Brunswick in the year 1781, misunderstood, hated, and decried. In that same year appeared in Königsberg *Die Kritik der reinen Vernunft*—the “Critique of Pure Reason”—by Immanuel Kant. With this book, which,

owing to a strange delay, did not become generally known for eight years, began in Germany a spiritual revolution which has the most marvellous analogy with the material Revolution of France, and which must appear to a profound thinker quite as important. It develops itself with the same phases, and a most remarkable parallelism appears in both. On both sides of the Rhine we see the same breach with the past; all respect is denied to tradition; as in France every right, as in Germany every thought, has been obliged to justify itself. And as the monarchy, the key-stone of the old social order of things, fell here, so fell there deism, the key-stone of the spiritual ancient régime.

We will speak in the following book of this catastrophe, which was the 21st of January of deism. A strange dread, a mysterious reverence, does not permit us to write further to-day. Our breast is filled with terrible compassion; it is the ancient Jehovah himself preparing for death.¹ We have known him so well from his cradle upwards, in Egypt, where he was brought up among sacred calves, crocodiles, holy onions, ibises and cats. We have seen him as he bid adieu to these play-mates of his childhood and obelisks and sphinxes, and became a small god-king in Palestine to

¹ In the French version, "c'est le vieux du ciel lui-même qui se prépare à la mort."

a poor pastoral people, and dwelt in his own temple-palace. We saw him later when he came into contact with the Assyrian-Babylonian civilisation, and laid aside his all too human passions, and no longer belched wrath and vengeance, at least no longer thundered for every trumpery trash of sin.¹ We saw him emigrate to Rome, the capital, where he renounced all national prejudices and proclaimed the heavenly equality of all races, and with such fair phrases formed an opposition to the ancient Jupiter, and intrigued so long that at last he rose to power, and from the Capitol governed the state and the world, *urbem et orbem*. We saw how he spiritualised himself more and more, how he sweet-saintly wailed when he became a loving father, a universal friend of humanity, a benefactor of the human race, a philanthropist. It all availed him naught.

Hear ye the bell ring? Kneel down! they bring the sacrament to a dying God!

¹ *Lumperei*, literally blackguardism. *Lump* means a rag or a blackguard; hence in the French version *retille*.

FIRST PART.—BOOK THIRD.

FROM KANT TO HEGEL.

THERE is a story that an English mechanic, who had already invented the most artistically ingenious machines, hit upon the idea to make a man, and that it finally succeeded. This work of his hands could bear and behave itself perfectly like a man; it even had in its leathern breast a kind of human feeling, which did not differ greatly from the usual feelings of Englishmen. It could communicate its emotions in articulate tones, and the rustle and buzz of the inner wheels, rasps, and screws,¹ when heard, had the very intonation of pure English pronunciation; in short, this automaton was a perfect gentleman, and all that he wanted, to be a real man, was a soul. But this the English mechanic could not give him, and the poor creature having come to the consciousness of his imperfection, tormented his creator night and day, begging him for a soul. This entreaty became so intolerable,

¹ French version, "Rouages, ressorts et échappements."

that the artist at last fled in fear from his own work. But the automaton followed him at once by extra-post to the Continent, travelled constantly after him, caught him many times unexpectedly, and snarled and growled at him, "*Give me a soul!*"¹ We meet these two forms in every country, and those who know what their mutual relations are, understand their strange haste and anxious irritation. But when their peculiar conditions are known, one finds in it something common enough, and sees how a part of the English people, weary of its mechanical existence, demands a soul, while the other, agonised by this constant request, flies here and there, neither being able to remain at home.

This is a terrible tale. It is dreadful when the bodies which we have created demand a soul of us. But more horrible, appalling, and uncanny is it when we have made a soul which demands from us its body, and persecutes us with this prayer. The thought which we have formed is such a soul, and it leaves us no repose till we have given it a body, or till we have hurried it on to sensible realisation. The thought will become deed, the word flesh. And, wonderful! man, like God in the Bible, has only to express his thoughts, and a world forms itself; there is light or dark-

¹ It is hardly necessary to inform the English reader that this story is a *résumé* of Mrs Shelley's "Frankenstein."

ness, the waters are divided from the dry land, and wild beasts of the earth appear. The world is the signature of the Word.

Mark this, ye proud men of action! Ye are nothing but the unconscious under-workmen of the men of thought, who have often in modest silence prescribed for you all your work in the most determined and detailed manner. Maximilian Robespierre was nothing but the hand of Jean Jacques Rousseau, the bloody hand which drew from the womb of Time the body whose soul Rousseau had formed. The restless anxiety which embittered the life of Jean Jacques came perhaps from this, that he presented in his spirit what a midwife his thoughts needed to come forth bodily to life.¹

Old Fontenelle was perhaps in the right when he said, "If I had all the thoughts² in the world in my hand, I would take care not to open it." For my part, I think differently. If I had all the thoughts in this world in my hand, I would perhaps beg you to cut it off, and in any case I would not keep it long closed. I am not fitted or born to be a jailer of thoughts. By God, I'd let them go! Let them assume the most doubtful or serious forms, let them storm in wild Bacchantic trains through every land, let them

¹ All of this paragraph is wanting in the French version.

² In the French version "*toutes les vérités du monde*"

strike down with thyrsus-staves our most innocent flowers, let them burst into our hospitals and drive from its bed our old sick world—of course my heart would sorrow sadly, and I too would suffer, for, alas! I myself belong also to this old sick world, and the poet has said with justice, “We walk no better for abusing our crutches!” I am the sickest of you all, and the more to be pitied because I knew what health is. But ye, O men to be envied! know it not. Ye are capable of dying without knowing it yourselves. Yes, many of you died long, long ago, and declare that your real life is now just beginning. When I contradict such madmen, then they are angry and revile me, and, horrible! the corpses spring up round me and curse me; and what is more loathsome to me than their curses is their churchyard smell. . . . Away, ye spectres, for I speak now of one whose name has the power of exorcism—I speak of Immanuel Kant!

It is said that night-wandering ghosts are terrified when they see the sword of an executioner. But what terror must they then feel if any one holds out at them Kant’s “Critique of Pure Reason”? This book is the sword with which deism was decapitated in Germany.

To tell the honest truth, ye French in comparison with us Germans are tame and moderate. At best you could only kill a king, and he had

lost his head long before you chopped it off. And over that you needs make such a drumming and shouting and foot-stamping, that it shook all the earth. One really does too much honour to Maximilian Robespierre when we compare him to Immanuel Kant. Maximilian Robespierre, the great cockney of the Rue Saint-Honoré, had of course his fit of destruction when it came to the kingdom, and he twitched frightfully enough in his regicidal epilepsy; but as soon as the question was of the highest being, he wiped the white foam from his mouth and the blood from his hands, and put on his blue Sunday-coat with its shining buttons, and moreover stuck a bouquet before his broad waistcoat collar.

The history of the life of Immanuel Kant is hard to write, inasmuch as he had neither life nor history, for he lived a mechanically ordered, an abstract old bachelor life in a quiet retired street in Königsberg, an old town on the north-east border of Germany. I do not believe that the great clock of the cathedral there did its daily work more impassionately and regularly than its compatriot Immanuel Kant. Rising, coffee-drinking, writing, reading college lectures, eating, walking, had all their fixed time, and the neighbours knew that it was exactly half-past three when Immanuel Kant in his grey coat, with his Manilla cane in his hand, left his house-door

and went to the lime-tree avenue, which is still called in memory of him the Philosopher's Walk. There he walked its length eight times up and down in every season; and when the weather was threatening or the grey clouds announced rain, his servant, old Lampe, in anxious care walked behind him with a long umbrella under his arm, like an image of Providence.

Strange contrast between the external life of the man and his destroying, world-crushing thoughts! In very truth, if the citizens of Königsberg had dreamed of the real meaning of his thought, they would have experienced at his sight a greater horror than they would on beholding an executioner, who only kills men. But the good people saw nothing in him but a professor of philosophy, and when he at his regular hour passed by, they greeted him as a friend, and regulated their watches by him.

But if Immanuel Kant, the great destroyer in the world of thought, went far beyond Maximilian Robespierre in terrorism, he had many points of resemblance to him which challenge comparison between the twain. Firstly, we find in both the same inexorable, cutting, prosaic, sober sense of honour and integrity. Then we find in them the same talent for mistrust, which the one showed as regarded thoughts and called it criticism, while the other applied it to men.

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and entitled it republican virtue. But there was manifested in both, to the very highest degree, the type of *bourgeoisie*, of the common citizen. Nature meant them to weigh out coffee and sugar, but destiny determined that they should weigh other things; so one placed a king, and the other a god in the scales. . . .

And they both gave exact weight!

The "Critique of Pure Reason" is Kant's chief work, and we must occupy ourselves chiefly with it. None of his other writings are of such importance. This book, as I have mentioned, appeared in 1781, and first became known in 1789. It was at first quite neglected; only two trifling notices of it were published, and it was long before the attention of the public was drawn to this great work by articles from such men as Schutz, Schulz, and Reinhold. The cause of this delayed recognition lies without doubt in the strange form of the work and its bad expression. As regards the latter, Kant deserves more blame than any other philosopher, and all the more when we consider his preceding better style. The recently published collection of his minor works contains his first efforts, and we are amazed over them at his excellent and often witty writing. While Kant had his great work in his head, he hummed these essays like little airs. He seems to smile like a soldier arming himself for a con-

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flict in which he is sure to conquer. Among these little pieces are especially remarkable the "Universal Natural History" and "Theory of Heaven," which were written so early as 1755,¹ "Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime," written ten years later, as well as the "Dreams of a Spirit-Seer," full of caprices in the style of French essays. The wit of a Kant, as it reveals itself in these little writings, has in it something extremely peculiar. Wit there twines round the thought, and though not strong, attains thereby to a pleasing height. Without such support the best wit cannot flourish; it is like the grape-vine, which without a prop must creep miserably on the ground, and decay with its precious fruit.

But why did Kant write his "Critique of Pure Reason" in such a grey, dry, wrapping-paper style? I believe because he feared, in abandoning the mathematical form of the Descartes-Leibnitz-Wolfians, that learning would lose something of its dignity if it expressed itself in a light, attractive, and cheerful tone. Therefore he gave his style a stiff, abstract form, which coldly repulsed all familiarity from the lower classes of intellect. He wished to aristocratically distinguish himself from the popular philosophers of his time, who aimed at bourgeois simplicity, so he clothed

¹ In the French version "Théorie sur le Sentiment du Ciel."

his thoughts in a cold court-chance
 Here the Philistine spirit shows itse
 "Yet it may be that Kant needed fo
 measured path of ideas a languag
 carefully meted out, and he was una
 better. Only genius has for new tho
 word. But Immanuel Kant was no
 being conscious of this defect, Kant
 the good Maximilian, more distrust
 and in his critique of the faculty of
 even declared that genius has nothin
 science, as its sphere of action lies in

Kant did much harm by the un
 buckram style of his work, for imit
 intellect or vivacity aped him in his
 and so there sprang up the super
 man could not be a philosopher as
 However, the mathematical form can
 Kant, reappear in philosophy; he k
 without mercy and for ever in the "Ch
 Reason." "The mathematical fo
 "produces nothing but card-houses
 just as the philosophical form in
 develops mere idle talk." For the
 definition given in philosophy, as in
 where the definitions are not disc
 tuitive—that is, can be demonstrated
 —while what are called definitions
 are only presented experimentally an

ally, the real and correct definition only appearing at the end as a result.

How is it that philosophers show such a predilection for the mathematical form? It began even with Pythagoras, who indicated the principles of things with numbers. This was a thought inspired by genius. All that which is sensible and finite is concisely given in a number, and yet it indicates something determined, and its relation to something determined, which last, if also characterised by a number, assumes the same character of the spiritualised and infinite. Herein number is like ideas, which have the same character and the same relation to one another. One can set forth with numbers in a very striking manner ideas as they manifest themselves in our soul and in nature, but the number always remains the number of the idea, and not the idea itself. The master understands this difference, but the scholar forgets it, and so transmits to other pupils only numerical hieroglyphics, mere ciphers, whose living meaning is lost, yet which are chattered with pedantic pride. This applies also to other elements of the mathematical form. The intellectual in its eternal action endures no fixation; it will no more allow itself to be fixed by number than by the line, triangle, square, and circle. Thought can neither be numbered nor measured.

As it is my task to facilitate the study of Ger-

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man philosophy in France, I chiefly discuss those externals which always repel the ignorant beginner, and I specially call the attention of writers who would bring Kant before the French public, that they omit that part of his philosophy which only serves to combat the absurdities of the Wolfian philosophy. This controversy, which shows itself everywhere, can only cause confusion to a French reader, and profit him nothing. I hear that Dr. Schon, a learned German in Paris, is busy with a French edition of Kant. I have too favourable an opinion of the philosophical views of this writer to believe that he has need of any such suggestion, and I expect from him a book both useful and important.¹

The "Critique of Pure Reason" is, as I have said, the chief work of Kant, and his other writings may be regarded as such as can be passed by, or considered simply as commentaries on it. What social meaning lies in this chief work may be found in the following remarks.

Philosophers had, before Kant, reflected on the origin of knowledge, and took, as we have seen, two different paths, according to their choosing ideas *à priori* or *à posteriori*, but less was reflected on the cognitive faculty, or that of knowledge itself, and the comprehension of our power of

¹•The last two passages are wanting in the French version
—Translator

knowing, or its limits. This was the task of Kant; he submitted our faculty of knowledge to a pitiless search; he sounded all the depth of this faculty, and determined all its limits. Thus he found, of course, that we can know nothing at all about many things with which we once thought we were most intimately acquainted, which was very vexatious, and yet it is always advantageous to know what the things are of which we can know nothing. He who warns us against ways which lead to nothing does us a good service as the man who sets us on the right path. Kant proved that we know nothing of things as they are in and for themselves, and that we can have no knowledge of them except so far as they are reflected in our own soul. We are, therefore, quite like the prisoners of whom Plato speaks so sadly in the seventh book of his "Republic." These wretches, chained neck and leg, so that they cannot turn their heads, sit in a dungeon which is open above, so as to give them some light. But this light comes from a fire which is burning above and behind them, and which is separated from them by a little wall. Along this wall people walk, bearing all kinds of statues and images of stone or wood, and conversing together. But the poor prisoners can see nothing of these men, who are not so high as the wall, and though the statues rise above it, they only see of these the shadows which pass along

the wall before them. Therefore they take these shadows for the objects themselves, and, deceived by the echo of their dungeon, believe that what they hear are the voices of the shadows.

The previous philosophy, which had run about sniffing at things, to collect and classify their characteristics, ended when Kant appeared. He led back investigation into the human soul itself, and examined what was in it. Therefore it was with reason that he compared his philosophy with the method followed by Copernicus. In old times, when the world was made to stand still and the sun to turn round it, astronomical calculations went wrong; but when Copernicus reversed this arrangement, all went admirably. And once, reason, like the sun, circulated round the world of phenomena, and sought to enlighten it; but Kant bade the sun of reason stand still, and it obeyed him, and the world of phenomena turned around it, and was enlightened according to the measure in which it came within its sphere.

From the few words with which I have indicated Kant's task, every one will understand that I consider that part of his book in which he treats the so-called noumena and phenomena as the most important of all. Kant here makes a difference between the appearances of things and the things in themselves. Since we can only know anything of things so far as they appear to us, and as they

do not manifest themselves as they are, in and for themselves, Kant named things as they appear *phenomena*, and things in and for themselves *noumena*. We can only know something of them as the former, nothing of them as the latter. Noumena are purely problematic; we can neither say that they exist or do not. Yes, the word *noumen* is only placed in antithesis to *phænomen*, to be able to speak of things so far as they are knowable by us without exercising our judgment on things which are not to be known.

Kant therefore has not, like many teachers whom I will not name, divided things into phenomena and noumena, into things which exist for, and those which do not exist for us. This would be an Irish bull in philosophy. He only wished to give a conception of their limits.

God is, according to Kant, a *noumen*. Therefore, according to his argument, that transcendental ideal being whom we have hitherto called God is nothing but an invention. It arose from a natural delusion. Yes, Kant shows how we can know nothing of that noumen or God, and how all future proof of his existence is impossible. We write the Dantean words, "Leave hope behind," over this portion of the "Critique of Pure Reason."¹

¹ In the French version the Italian original, *Lasciate ogni speranza*, is given. The reader may here observe that all of Heine's comments on German philosophers, as indeed on all

I believe that the reader will willingly excuse me from giving the popular disquisition of that part where the author treats of "principles of the proof of speculative reason deducing the existence of a highest being." Though the real refutation of these proofs takes small space, and does not occur till in the first half of the second volume, it is introduced from the first with the utmost foresight, and forms one of the main points of the book. It is connected with the Critique of all Speculative Theology, and there the last airy images of the deists perish. I must remark that Kant, while attacking the three principal proofs of the existence of God, that is to say, the ontological, cosmological, and physico-theological, in my opinion destroys the last two, but not the first. I do not know whether these terms are known here, and I give the passage from the "Critique of Pure Reason" where Kant formulises their distinction.

"There are only three possible proofs of the existence of God by speculative reason. Every road which one can take with this intention must begin either from determined experience and the thereby recognised special adaptability of the world of sense, and rise from it according to the

writers, are to be invariably taken with a great deal of the salt of caution and distrust. The majority of the students of Kant, that is to say, of men who are far more deeply familiar with his works than was our author, utterly dissent from this conclusion of atheism.—*Translator*

laws of causality to the supreme cause out of and above the world, or they have for basis only undetermined experience, that is, an existence, or else they make abstraction of all experience, and conclude altogether *à priori* from mere ideas as to the existence of a highest cause. The first proof is the psycho-theological, the second the cosmological, and the third the ontological. More there are not, and more can never be."

After reading Kant's principal book several times, I thought that I recognised that the conflict against these persisting arguments for the existence of God lurks everywhere in them, and I would treat of them more fully were I not restrained by a religious feeling. When any one begins to discuss the existence of God, I experience at once such a painful and anxious feeling, such an unceasing misery as I once felt in London, in New Bedlam, when I, surrounded by lunatics, lost sight of my guide. "God is all which is," and to doubt as to him is doubt of life itself and death.

And just so much as the discussion of the existence of God is blamable, so much the more praiseworthy is the meditation on the nature of God. This meditation is a really divine service; our soul is abstracted by it from the transitory and finite, and is rapt away to a consciousness of the primal goodness and eternal harmony.

This consciousness thrills through human feelings in prayer or in contemplating church symbols; the thinker experiences this holy state of mind when practising that sublime intellectual power which we call reason, and whose highest task it is to seek into the nature of God. Peculiarly religious men occupy themselves with this task from childhood; they are mysteriously impelled to it by the first stir of reason.¹ The author of these pages is conscious that he possessed most genially such an early, original religious feeling, and it has never left him. God was ever the beginning and the end of all my thoughts. If I now ask, "What is God? what is his nature?" so as a little child I inquired, "How is God? what does he look like?" And then I could look all day long up into heaven, and was much troubled in the evening because I had never seen the holiest face of God, but always only grey, imbecile caricatures of clouds. And I was utterly confused with fragments of astronomy, which, during the rage and age of enlightenment, even the smallest children were not spared, and I could not sufficiently wonder that all these thousand millions of stars were earth globes as great and as beautiful as ours, and that over all this shining swarm of worlds there ruled a single God. I

¹ The end of this paragraph and the whole of the two which follow are wanting in the French version,

remember that once in a dream I saw God, far on high in the remotest distance. He smiled cheerfully out of a little heavenly window, a pious and aged face with a small Jewish beard, and he threw out much seed-corn, and the grains as they fell from heaven out into the endless space extended till they became real light-gleaning, blooming, inhabited worlds, every one as great as ours. I could never forget that face. I often again in my dreams saw the cheerful old man throwing the world-seed down from his little heavenly window. I once even saw him cluck with his lips as our maid did when she threw the hens their barley. I could only see how the grains expanded to great shining world-balls, but the great hens, which perhaps were watching somewhere with open beaks to be fed with the world-balls, I could not see.

You smile, dear reader, at the great hens. Yet this childish idea is not too remote from the conceptions of the maturest deists. To give an idea of the God beyond the world, the East and West have exhausted themselves in childish hyperboles, and the imagination of deists has tormented itself in vain with the infinitude of space and time. Here there is shown all their weakness, the nothingness of their views of the creation, and their ideas of the nature of God. It troubles us but little when these ideas are destroyed; and

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this suffering Kant really inflicted on them by destroying their proofs of the existence of God.

Even the saving of the ontological proof would not avail deism much, for it is as available for Pantheism. To make myself more clearly understood, I remark that the ontological proof of it is that which Descartes adduces, and which was uttered long ago in the Middle Age by Anselm of Canterbury in a touching prayer. Yes, one may say that St. Augustin gave the ontological proof in his second book *De Libero Arbitrio*.

I refrain, as I have said, from any popular expounding of the Kantian polemic against those proofs. I content myself by declaring that deism since then has vanished from the realm of speculative reason. This funeral news will perhaps require some centuries to become generally known, but we have long been in mourning for it. *De profundis*.

You think perhaps that we can go home now! Not yet; by my soul! there is another piece to be played. After the tragedy comes the farce. Immanuel Kant has hitherto appeared as the grim inexorable philosopher; he has stormed heaven, put all the garrison to the sword, the ruler of the world swims senseless¹ in his blood; there is no more

¹ The following is here in the French version. "Vous voyez étendus sans ire les gardes-du-corps ontologiques, cosmologiques et psychothéologiques, la déité elle-même privée de démonstration a succombé."

any mercy, or fatherly goodness, or future reward for present privations; the immortality of the soul is in its last agonies—death rattles and groans! And old Lampe stands by with his umbrella under his arm as a sorrowing spectator, and the sweat of anguish and tears run down his cheeks. Then Immanuel Kant is moved to pity, and shows himself not only a great philosopher, but a good man. He considers, and half good-naturedly and half ironically says—

“Old Lampe must have a God, or else the poor man cannot be happy; and people really ought to be happy in this world. Practical common-sense declares *that*. Well, *meinetwegen*, for all I care, let practical reason guarantee the existence of a God.”

And in consequence of this argument, Kant distinguishes between theoretical reason and practical reason, and with the latter, as with a magic wand, revives the corpse of deism, which theoretical reason had slain.¹

Did Kant undertake this resurrection out of love to old Lampe or for fear of the police? Or did he really act from conviction? Or did he, after destroying every proof of the existence of a God, really wish to show us how dangerous

¹ French version, “il ressuscite le Dieu que la raison théorique avait tué.”

and doubtful it is, if we can know nothing of the existence of God? Therein he managed as wisely as did my Westphalian friend, who, after he had broken and extinguished all the street-lamps in the Grohnderstrasse in Gottingen, delivered unto us, standing in darkness, a long lecture on the practical necessity of the lamps which he had theoretically smashed, to show us that without them we could see nothing.

I have already mentioned that the "Critique of Pure Reason" caused no sensation whatever when it appeared. It was not till several years had passed, and after several intelligent philosophers had written regarding it, that it excited the attention of the public. Then, in 1789, nothing else was heard of in Germany save the Kantian philosophy, and it had in abundance to redundancy its commentaries, chrestomathies, explanations, criticisms and defences. It is enough to cast a glance at the catalogue of philosophical works, and it will be seen that the innumerable works which then appeared on Kant abundantly indicate the intellectual movement which this one man originated. Some show a foaming enthusiasm, others bitter discontent, many an open-mouthed anticipation of the result of this spiritual revolution. We had outbreaks in the intellectual world, even as you had in the material, and we were as much fired and inspired at the tearing down of ancient

dogmatism as you were at the storming of the Bastille. And there were also in our case only a few old invalids who defended dogmatism—that is, the Wolfian philosophy. It was a revolution whereunto horrors were not wanting. In the party of the past, the really good Christians were the foremost in such cruelty; yes, they longed for still greater horrors, that the measure might be full to overflowing, so that the counter-revolution might the sooner come as a necessary reaction. We too had our pessimists in philosophy, as you had in politics; and as there were people in France who declared that Robespierre was only an agent of Pitt, many pessimists went as far by us in self-delusion as to believe that Kant was in secret understanding with them, and had destroyed the hitherto existing proofs of the existence of God, so that the world might see that no one can ever attain to a knowledge of God by means of reason, and that here, too, we must hold to revealed religion

Kant brought about this great intellectual movement not so much by the contents of his writings as by the critical spirit which pervaded them, and which now penetrated all science. Every branch of learning was inspired by it; even poetry did not escape the influence. Schiller, for instance, was a powerful Kantian, and his views of art are impregnated by the spirit of

the Kantian philosophy.¹ Yet this philosophy was very injurious to belles-lettres and the fine arts on account of its abstract dryness.² Fortunately it did not get into cookery.

The Germans do not readily yield to emotion, but once under way they press on with the most stubborn perseverance to the end. So we showed ourselves in religion; so we manifested ourselves in philosophy. Shall we be as logically progressive in politics?³

Germany had been led by Kant into the philosophic road; so philosophy became a national cause. A brave array of great thinkers sprang up as if by magic from the German soil. And if, as happened in the French Revolution, German philosophy should ever find its Thiers and Mignet, its history will afford remarkable reading, which the German will peruse with pride and the French with amazement.

Among the disciples of Kant, Johann Gottlieb Fichte soon distinguished himself.

¹ Campbell, the English poet, also felt this influence, and went to Germany for the purpose of studying the philosophy of Kant.

² Where true poetic genius exists, studies which severely discipline perfect it. Heine himself illustrates this.

³ This, when written, was a wise, far-seeing, or even deeply prophetic remark, for there were few indeed at the time who supposed that overmuch thought would ever be followed by practical action. Heine took the idea from the results of Saint-Simonism.

I almost despair of being able to give a correct idea of this man. In Kant we had only to study a book. But here, beside the book, we have also a man to consider—a man in whom thought and mind are one and the same, and in such grand unity did they work upon the world of his time. We have, therefore, not only a philosophy to investigate, but also a character, by which they are equally limited; and to understand the influence of both, we need some sketch of what were the influences of the time. What an extensive problem! Certainly we may be held excused should we here give but scanty indication.

To begin with, it is very difficult to give an idea of the thoughts of Fichte. Here we come at once to certain difficulties, which concern not only the content, but also the form and method, both being things with which we shall gladly make the stranger acquainted. First of all, the Fichtean method. This was in the beginning taken altogether from Kant, but it was soon changed, from the nature of circumstances. Kant produced only a critique, that is, something negative, but Fichte had later a system, and consequently something positive to put forward. On account of this want of a determined system, many have declared that the philosophy of Kant has no claim to be called a philosophy. So far as Kant himself is concerned they were right, but not as

regards the Kantians, who deduced from the treatises and principles of their master an all-sufficient array of well-based systems. In his earlier writings, Fichte, as I said, remained true to the Kantian method, so that his first treatise, which appeared anonymously, might be attributed to Kant. But when Fichte had later set forth a system, he fell into a zealous self-willed passion for construction, and so having constructed a world, he began as earnestly and wilfully as ever to demonstrate from top to bottom how the construction was conducted. In these processes Fichte manifests what may be called an abstract passion. Subjectivity predominates in his manner of teaching as well as in the system itself. Kant, however, lays thought before him, dissects it, analyses it into its finest fibres, and his "Critique of Pure Reason" is at the same time an anatomical theatre of intellect. He himself always remains cold and impassive, like a true surgeon.

As the method, so is the form of Fichte's writings. It is living, but it has all the faults of life—it is restless and confusing. In order to be animated, Fichte scorned the usual terminology of philosophers, which seemed to him to be a dead thing; but he is on this account all the more difficult to comprehend. And he had peculiar fancies on this subject of comprehension. While Reinhold thought as he did, Fichte declared that

no one understood him better than Reinhold; but when the latter left his school, Fichte declared that the latter had never understood him. When he differed from Kant, he put it into print that Kant had never understood himself. Here I touch upon a comic point in our philosophers in this, that they incessantly complain that they are not understood. When Hegel lay on his death-bed he said, "Only *one* man ever understood me;" but added immediately after, "and he did not understand me either."

As regards intrinsic value in and for itself, the Fichtean philosophy is of little importance. It has furnished society with no result.¹ Only so far as it is one of the most remarkable phases of German philosophy, only so far as it sets forth the fruitlessness of Idealism in its last deductions, and only so far as it supplies the necessary

¹ As regards these "intrinsic" valuations of Heine, it is almost unnecessary to remark that from the Evolutionary or Darwinian standpoint of pure science, all metaphysical systems whatever, from those of Descartes, or as far back as we please, down to the latest dregs of Hegelianism, are all equally valueless. As regards their importance in influencing current thought and literature or art, that is an entirely different matter. The same may be said of all superstitions, religious laws, or any "spiritual" causes or influences. Heine subsequently very much contradicts himself as regards the assertion that Fichte's philosophy "furnished society with no result." Its influence in its time was very great, and Heine himself declares that it "demolished all the past."—*Translator*.

transition to the natural philosophy or science of the present day, is the Fichtean philosophy of some interest. But as its tenor and substance is rather historical and scientific than socially important, I will give it in as few words as possible.

The problem which Fichte proposed is, "What grounds have we for assuming that conceptions (*Vorstellungen*) of things correspond to things out of us?" And he answers this by saying, "All things only have reality to us in our mind."

The *Wissenschaftslehre* or "Doctrine of Science" was Fichte's chief work, as the "Critique of Pure Reason" had been that of Kant. The one is a continuation of the other. The "Doctrine of Science" leads the soul into itself. But where Kant analysed, Fichte constructs. His book begins with an abstract formula, $I = I$; it creates and develops the world from the depth of the soul; it brings the separated parts together; it retraces the path to abstraction till it reaches the world of phenomena. This world the mind can therefore understand as the necessary actions or workings of intelligence.

There is also the peculiar difficulty with Fichte that he assumes that the mind observes itself while in action. The "I" considers its own intellectual workings while executing them. Thought watches itself while it thinks, while it gets warmer and

warmer to the scalding-point.¹ This operation reminds us of the monkey cooking his own tail in a copper kettle. For he thinks that the real art of cooking consists not only in cooking objectively, but that he shall be also subjectively conscious of the cooking.

It is remarkable that the Fichtean philosophy always had to endure much from satire. I once saw a caricature which represented a Fichtean goose. It had so great a liver that the poor creature no longer knew whether it was goose or liver. On its belly was written $I=I$. Jean Paul ridiculed the Fichtean philosophy most cruelly in a book entitled *Clavis Fichteana*.² That Idealism in its logical deduction should deny the reality of

¹ A process which Heine himself very often unconsciously illustrates, as in this instance, by the needless repetition of an idea till it becomes intolerable. Here we have the simple assertion that the mind observes itself in action given three times in succession.—*Translator*.

² Heine never really comprehended that sparrows and wasps pick at the best and ripest fruit, or that a writer who can sting, or render another a laughing-stock for fools, is not on that account the better and greater intellect of the two. All the ridicule directed against Fichte (Richter's included) was of a very stupid and wooden character, not nearly equal to what had been levelled long before at Berkeley, who was also as generally vulgarly misunderstood, and is by some misunderstood to this day. Goethe, to judge by his jests on Fichte in *Faust* and in a letter which Heine quotes, would appear to have had no intelligence of the latter's method, and to have thought that he really denied the reality of matter.—*Translator*.

matter, seemed to the public at large a joke which was carried too far; so we heartily ridiculed the • Fichtean *I* which brought forth the whole world of phenomena by merely thinking. Our jesters also made the most of a misunderstanding which became too popular for me to pass it by. The multitude understood that the Fichtean *I* means the *I* of Johann Gottlieb Fichte, and that this individual *I* ignored all other existences. "What impudence!" cried the good people; "the man does not believe that we exist—we, who are far more corpulent than he is, and who as burgo-masters and official actuaries are by far his superiors." The ladies asked, "But he at least believes in the existence of his wife?" "No." "And Mrs. Fichte puts up with that!"

The Fichtean *I* is, however, no individual *I*, but the universal *I* or *Me*—that is, the universal *I* of creation¹ arrived at self-consciousness. The Fichtean thinking is *not* the thought of an individual or of a determinate man who is called Johann Gottlieb Fichte; it is rather a universal thinking which manifests itself in an individual. Thus, as one says "it rains," "it lightens," so Fichte would not say "I think," but "*it* thinks," "the universal thought thinks in me."

In a comparison of the French Revolution with German philosophy, I once, more in jest than in

¹ "Das zum Bewusstsein gekommene allgemeine Welt-Ich."

earnest, likened Fichte to Napoleon. But in reality there are here certain striking analogies. After the Kantians had finished their reign of terror and of destruction, Fichte appeared, as did Napoleon after the Convention, and in like manner demolished all the past with a Critique of Pure Reason. Napoleon and Fichte represented the great inexorable *I*, according to which thought and deed are one and the same, and the colossal structures which both erected indicate colossal wills. But by the excesses of this will these buildings soon perished, and the doctrine of Science and the Empire passed away as rapidly as they had risen.¹

The Empire has now a place only in history, but the impulse which the Emperor caused in the world is still in action, and our present time lives in it. So it was with the Fichtean philosophy. It has quite passed away, but men's souls are still moved by the thoughts which Fichte expressed, and the result of his teaching has been incalculable. If the whole transcendental philosophy was an error, there still lived in Fichte's works a proud independence, a love of freedom, a manly

¹ The parallel between France in material political development and Germany in thought, which forms the *motive* of this book, is worked out with a skill and delicacy which could only have been shown by a poet, and which would probably never have occurred to any poet save Heine. And one of the most brilliant and admirable points of its appearance is this comparison of Fichte to Napoleon.—*Translator*

dignity, which exerted, especially on youth, a wholesome influence. Fichte's *I* was perfectly in accordance with his unbending, stiff-necked, iron character. The doctrine of such an almighty *I* could perhaps only spring from such a character, and that character must, rooting itself more deeply in such a doctrine, become more inflexible, more unyielding, more iron-like.¹

What a terror must this man have been to the senseless sceptics, the frivolous eclectics, and the moderates of every line! His whole life was a battle. The history of his youth is a series of sorrows and anxieties, as it is with that of all our great men. Poverty sits by their cradles and rocks them till they are grown up, and this squalid nurse remains their true companion through life.

Nothing is more touching than to see how Fichte, the proud-willed man, tried to torment himself along through life by private tutorship; for he could not find even such pitiable daily bread in his own country, and must go to Warsaw. There the old story repeated; the tutor does not please my lady, or perhaps her lady's-maid; his bows and scrapings are not graceful enough, or not sufficiently French, and he is found incapable

¹ These are true words well spoken, but, as I have remarked, they are in flat contradiction to the authōr's previous assertion that "the Fichtean philosophy is of little importance, and has furnished society with no result." No man ever had more influence in Germany in his time than Fichte.—*Translator.*

of undertaking the education of a small Polish gentleman. So Johann Gottlieb Fichte is turned away like a lackey, and can hardly get from his master the scanty means of departure. So he leaves Warsaw and wanders to Königsberg, inspired by youthful enthusiasm and a desire to meet Kant. The meeting of these two men is in every respect interesting, and I do not think that I can better set them forth than by giving a fragment from Fichte's diary, which is contained in a biography of him which was recently published by his son.

“On the 25th of July I left for Königsberg with a waggoner, and arrived there on the 1st of August, without having met with anything remarkable. On the 4th I visited Kant, who showed no great warmth in his reception. I, without subscribing, attended his lectures, and was somewhat disappointed, for his delivery is dull or drowsy.

“Meanwhile I write this record:—

“I have desired to have a serious conference with Kant, but found no means of effecting it. At last it occurred to me to write a ‘Critique of all the Revelations,’ and to send it to him as a letter of recommendation. I began it on the 13th, and have since then worked at it without ceasing. When it was finished, on the 18th of August, I sent the work to Kant, and went on.”

the 25th to learn his opinion of it. He received me with great affability, and seemed to be very much pleased with the treatise. We did not have a formal philosophical discussion; as regarded my doubts, he referred me to his 'Critique of Pure Reason,' and the Court-preacher Schultz, whom I should at once visit. On the 26th I dined at Kant's with Professor Sommer, and found my host a very agreeable and witty man; it was for the first time to-day that I recognised in him the traits worthy of the genius which abounds in his writings.

"*August 27.*—I ended this journal after having made the extracts from Kant's lectures on Anthropology which Herr von S. had lent me. I also resolve to regularly continue this journal every evening before going to sleep, and to set down in it everything interesting which I meet, but especially traits of character and observations.

"*August the 28th, evening.*—I begun yesterday to revise my Critique, and had some really good deep thoughts, but which—more's the pity!—convinced me that my first sketch was utterly superficial. To-day I wished to continue my new investigations, but my imagination was so excited, that I could do nothing all day. In my present condition this is nothing strange! *I have reckoned that I can subsist here only fourteen days more. It is true that I have been in such embarrass-

ments before, but then it was in my native land, and what with increasing years and a more pressing sense of honour, it *is* harder to endure. I have made no resolution, nor can I come to any. I will not open my heart to Pastor Borowski, to whom Kant sent me; if I must do so, it shall only be to Kant himself.

“On the 29th I went to Borowski, and found him a really good, honourable man. He proposed a condition which is not, however, very certain, and which does not altogether please me, but his frank and open manner drew from me the confession that I was hard pressed for a place. He advised me to go to Professor W. I have not been able to work to-day. The next day I went to W., and then to the Court-preacher Schulz. Chances by the first are not very favourable, but he spoke of a situation as a family tutor in Courland, which only dire need would compel me to accept. Afterwards to the court-preacher, where I was, at first, received by his wife. He appeared afterwards, buried in mathematical circles, but when he heard my name distinctly, he became, owing to Kant’s recommendation, all the more friendly. He has an angular Prussian face, but honourable feeling and good-nature itself gleam from every feature. There I also became acquainted with Herr Braunlich and his *protégés*, Count Danhof, Herr Buttner, nephew of the

Court-preacher, and a young *savant* from Nuremberg, Herr Ehrard, a good and sensible person, but without knowledge of life or of the world.

“On the 1st of September I formed a firm resolution which I would communicate to Kant. A situation as tutor, however unwilling I am to accept it, is not to be found, and the uncertainty of my position hinders me from working at my ease, or from benefiting by social intercourse with my friends; therefore, back again to my home! The small loan which I need for that, I may, perhaps, obtain by Kant’s aid. But on the way to him to make this request, my courage failed. I determined to write to him. In the evening I was invited to the court-preacher’s, where I passed the time very pleasantly. On the 2nd I finished the letter to Kant, and sent it.”

Remarkable as this letter is, I cannot make up my mind to give it in French. I think I feel blushes on my cheeks, and as if I were called on to relate the most delicate family secrets to strangers. Despite my efforts to live in the French way of the world, despite my philosophic cosmopolitanism, old Germany and its bourgeois feeling is always in my heart. Enough! I cannot give that letter, and I merely mention that Immanuel Kant was so poor, that he, notwithstanding the heartrending, touching tone of that letter, could not lend Johann Gottlieb Fichte any money. But

the latter was not in the least vexed, as may be inferred from the words of his journal, which we here continue.

"On the 3rd September I was invited to Kant's. He received me with his usual frankness, but said he had not as yet come to any determination regarding my request, and that he would be quite unable to do anything for fourteen days to come. What charming candour! Moreover, he raised difficulties as to my plans, which proved that he does not very well understand our position in Saxony. Now for days I have done nothing, but I will work after this, and leave the rest to God.

"On the 6th I was invited to Kant's house. He proposed to me to sell the publisher Hartung, through Pastor Borowski, my manuscript of the 'Critique of all the Revelations.' When I spoke of revising it he said, 'It is well written.' Can this be true? and yet Kant says so! However, he declined my first request.

"The 10th I was at dinner, the mid-day meal, with Kant. Nothing was said of our affairs. Magister Gensichen was present, and we had a very general and at times very interesting conversation, Kant being always the same to me.

"The 13th I wished to work and did nothing. My disheartenment is too much for me! How will all this end? Where shall I be eight days hence? Then all my money will be spent!"

After much wandering, and after a long delay in Switzerland, Fichte at last found a firm place in Jena, and from this time his brilliant period begins. Jena and Weimar, two Saxon towns which are only a few leagues apart, were then the centre of intellectual life in Germany. The Court and poetry were in Weimar, in Jena the University and philosophy; in the one the great poets, in the other the great scholars of our country were to be seen. In 1794 Fichte began his course of lectures in Jena. The date is significant, and explains not only the spirit of his writings at that time, but also the trials and tribulations to which he was subsequently exposed, and to which he succumbed four years later. For in 1798 there rose against him the outcry of atheism, which attracted intolerable persecutions, and caused him to leave Jena. This event, the most remarkable in Fichte's life, has a general importance, and I cannot pass it over in silence. And here Fichte's views as to the nature of God are appropriately in place.

In the *Philosophical Journal* which Fichte then published he printed an article entitled "Development of the Idea of Religion," which had been sent to him by a certain Forberg, who was a schoolmaster in Suhlfeld. To this he added a short explanatory treatise with the title "The foundation of our faith in a divine government of the world."

The two articles were at once seized by the Government of the Elector of Saxony¹ under the accusation of atheism. At the same time there was sent from Dresden to the court of Weimar a requisition enjoining the severe punishment of Professor Fichte. The Court of Weimar would not, of course, let itself be led astray by any such demand, but Fichte on this occasion made the greatest blunders. For he addressed an appeal to the public without license from the proper authority, which was the cause that the Government of Weimar, displeased and under external pressure, could not well avoid inflicting a mild reprimand on the professor who had been so inconsiderate in his expressions. But Fichte, who believed himself to be altogether in the right, would not calmly submit to such reprimand, and left Jena. To judge by his letters, he was very much pained by the conduct of two men whose official positions made them very influential in his affair, and these men were His Dignity the Chief Consistorial Counciller von Herder, and His Excellence the Privy-Counciller von Goethe. But both were abundantly justified. It is touching to read in the posthumous letters of Herder how the poor man had his own troubles and trials with the candidates of theology, who, after having studied in Jena, came before him in

¹ Aursachsischen Regierung.

Weimar to undergo examination as Protestant preachers. He dared not ask them a question as to Christ the Son; he was only too glad when they would admit the existence of the Father. As for Goethe, he expresses himself as follows in his Memoirs on this subject:—

“After the departure from Jena of Reinhold, who was justly regarded as a great loss for the Academy, Fichte was boldly, or rather audaciously, invited to take his place. This professor had set forth his views with grandeur, but not always with tact, regarding the most important affairs of morals, manners, and state. He was one of the ablest individuals ever seen, and there was nothing to blame in his opinions regarded from a higher point of view; but how could he get on on equal terms with a world which he regarded as his own creation and possession?

“As he had been limited regarding the time which he wished to appropriate for lecturing on week-days, he undertook to deliver them on Sundays, which attempt found many hindrances. The little and great annoyances which resulted from all this were hardly allayed and alleviated, not without inconvenience to higher authorities, when his declarations as to God and Divine things, in which he had better have kept silent, attracted from without annoying agitation.

“Fichte had ventured in his *Philosophic Jour-*

nal to express himself regarding God and things Divine in a manner which seemed contradictory to that usually employed. He was blamed, and his defence in no way bettered the affair, because he went passionately to work, never suspecting how much kind feeling existed in his favour, although people knew so well how to interpret his thoughts and words. This they could not of course say to him straightforwardly, and quite as little that one wished ever so little to aid him out of the difficulty. Arguing for and against, surmising and declaring, confirmations and resolutions, fluctuated in many uncertain contradictory speeches at the Academy; there was question of a Ministerial remonstrance, and of nothing less than a reprimand which Fichte was to expect. At this, losing all self-control, he thought himself justified in addressing a passionate memorial to the Ministry, in which he, assuming that the report of a reprimand was authentic, declared with petulance and defiance that he would never endure it; that he would rather, without further delay, leave the Academy, and that in such a case not only would he resign, but with him several other distinguished professors.

“After this, of course, all good-will regarding him was checked—yes, paralysed. Here there was no way out, no intermediation possible, and the mildest course was to give him without delay

his dismissal. And it was not till the matter was past mending that he learned the turn which would gladly have been given to it, and he was obliged to regret his rash haste, as we did also."

Is not all this the Ministerial, smoothing-over, hushing-up Goethe to the very life? All which he blames in his heart is that Fichte did not express himself more gradually. He does not blame the thoughts, but their words. That deism had been destroyed in the German world of thought since the time of Kant was, as I have said, a secret known to every one, and yet a secret which must not be cried in the market-place. Goethe was no more of a deist than was Fichte, for he was a Pantheist, but it was precisely on the heights of Pantheism that Goethe could perceive the indefensibility of the Fichtean philosophy, at which a smile must have passed over his gentle lips. To the Jews, who are in the end all deists, Fichte must have been a torment; to the great heathen he was only a folly.¹ The Great Heathen is the

¹ What does not appear to have struck Heine as most discreditable to all concerned in this affair of Fichte is the fact that, among all his dear and distinguished friends, there was not one, according to Goethe's declaration, to tell him plainly how affairs stood. There was "too much delicacy . . . one could not of course speak to him straightforwardly;" so he was allowed to believe himself to be friendless and oppressed, till the catastrophe came, "and then we were all so sorry!"

name applied in Germany to Goethe, but it is not altogether appropriate. The heathenism of Goethe is marvellously modernised. His strong heathen nature shows itself in clear sharp conceptions of all external appearances, all colours and forms; but Christianity has at the same time gifted him with deeper intelligence; in spite of his struggling resistance, it initiated him into the mysteries of the spirit-world; he has drunk the blood of Christ, and this taught him the most secret voices in Nature, like Siegfried in the *Nibelungenlied*, who at once understood the voices of the birds when a drop of the dragon's blood had touched his lips. It is wonderful how Goethe's heathen nature was penetrated by our most ancient sentimentalism, how the antique marble beat with a modern pulse, and how he could feel the sorrows of a young Werther as vividly as the joys of an antique Greek god. The Pantheism of Goethe is therefore very different from that of the heathen. To express myself briefly, he was the Spinoza of poetry. All of Goethe's poems are saturated with the same spirit which breathes in the works of Spinoza. That Goethe was utterly given up to the doctrine of Spinoza admits of no doubt. He busied himself with it all his life; he has partly confessed it in the beginning of his *Memoirs* as well as in the recently published last volume of the same work. I do not remember now where it was that I once

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read that Herder, vexed at this endless occupation with Spinoza, cried one day, "I wish that Goethe would for once take some other Latin book in hand than that of Spinoza!" But this applies not only to Goethe, but to many of his friends who were subsequently known more or less as poets, and who in their earlier days cultivated Pantheism, and this flourished in German art long ere it ruled among us as a philosophical theory. Even in Fichte's time, when Idealism attained its sublimest height, it was overthrown in the realm of art, and then there arose that art-revolution which is not yet at an end, and which began with the strife of the Romantic and the old Classic régime in the Schlegel uprising.¹

In fact, our first romantic writers were inspired by a Pantheistic impulse which they themselves did not understand. The feeling, which they believed was a home-sickness for the Catholic Mother-Church, had a deeper source than they dreamed, and their real reverence and prepossession for the traditions of the Middle Age, for its popular superstition, devildom, magic-work, and witchcraft, was all a suddenly awakened but unconscious yearning again for the Pantheism of the old Germans, and what they worshipped in the basely

¹ The words *mit den Schlegel'schen Lneuten* are omitted in the French version.

defiled and mischievously mutilated form was really the ante-Christian religion of their fathers. Here I must refer again to my first book, where I showed how Christianity absorbed the elements of the old German religion; how these, with disgraceful transformations, were still retained in popular mediæval belief, so that the old worship of Nature was regarded as mere vile sorcery, the old gods being changed to devils of ugliness, and the chaste priestesses to wild witches. The errors of our early romantic writers should from this point be more gently judged than is usually done. They would fain restore the Catholic condition of the Middle Age, because they felt that in it there were still preserved many of the sacred relics of their earliest ancestors and of the glories of their first nationality. It was these mutilated and dishonoured remains which so sympathetically attracted their feelings, and they hated the Protestantism and Liberalism which both strove to destroy the entire Catholic past.

Of all which I will speak in another place. Here I have only to mention that so soon as in the time of Fichte Pantheism forced itself into German art, that even the Catholic romantic writers unconsciously followed this course, and that Goethe announced it most distinctly. This is to be found even in *Werther*, where he yearns for a rapt and loving identity with Nature. In *Faust* he seeks -

to ally himself to Nature in a daringly mystical, direct manner. He evokes the secret powers of earth by the magic formulas of the Höllenzwang or Hell-compulsion.¹ But it is in the ballads of Goethe that this Pantheism shows itself most charmingly and purely. Here the doctrine of Spinoza has broken from the mathematical chrysalis, and flutters round us as a Goethean song. Hence the rage of our orthodox and pietists against these poems. They grasp with their pious bear's paws at this butterfly which constantly flies from them; it is so delicately ethereal, so winged with perfume. Ye French can form no conception of it unless you know the language. These Goethean songs have a mocking magic which is

¹ In the French version the following lines are added.—

“Il conjure les forces secrètes de la terre par les formules du Hœllenzwang, livre de magie, qu'on m'a montré un jour dans une vieille bibliothèque de couvent, on il etait enchainé; le titre représente le roi du feu, aux levres duquel pend peu d'un cadenas, et sur sa tête est perché un corbeau tenant dans son bec la bagnetle divinatorie.”

Heine's identification of Nature and a belief in spirits and fauns, &c., and Pantheism is so often repeated, that it is worth while to observe that Pantheism is properly a result or inference from the former, and is not found at all in the earlier stage. The savage begins by believing that a spirit is in the tree or rock or fountain, and when this extends to everything, some thinker deduces from the belief a conclusion that all is one. That is, Polytheism is the foundation of Pantheism, or its basis, not simply Pantheism itself, although it may live on and in it as a part.—*Translator*.

indescribable. The harmonious verses wind round the heart like a tender true love; the word embraces while the heart kisses thee!

We do not at all perceive in Goethe's conduct to Fichte any of the mean motives which many of his contemporaries set forth in much meaner words. They did not understand the different natures of the two men. The mildest misunderstood Goethe's indifference when Fichte was subsequently hard pressed and persecuted; and they did not see into Goethe's situation. This giant was Minister in a dwarf German state; he could not move naturally or freely. It was said of the seated Jupiter of Phidias in Olympia, that should he stand up, he would burst through the roof. This was quite Goethe's situation in Weimar; if he had suddenly risen from his quietly seated repose, he would have broken through the state-gable, or what was more likely, would have hit his head against it. And should he risk this for a doctrine which was not merely erroneous but also ridiculous? The German Jupiter remained quietly seated, and calmly allowed himself to be revered and incensed.

It would lead me too far from my subject should I, from the point of the art interests of those times, consider more closely the conduct of Goethe regarding this accusation as to Fichte. In favour of the latter it can only be said that

the complaint was really a pretext, and that political persecution lurked behind it. A theologian may indeed be indicted for atheism, because he is in duty bound to teach certain doctrines; but a philosopher has pledged himself to no such obligations, he cannot thus bind himself, and his thoughts are as free as the birds in the air. It is perhaps unjust that I, to spare my own feelings and those of others, do not here cite everything which supports and justifies this accusation. I will here give only one of the doubtful passages from the inculpated essay.

“Living and working moral order is God himself; we need no other God, and can comprehend no other. There is no foundation in reason for departing from that moral cosmos,¹ and, by means of a deduction from effect to cause, assume a special being as that cause. The original understanding certainly does not confirm this deduction and knows no such special being; only a philosophy which misunderstands itself can do so.”

As is peculiar to obstinate men, Fichte in his appeal to the public, and in his judicial reply, expressed himself even more hardly and harshly, and indeed with expressions which wound our deepest feelings. We who believe in a real God, who reveals himself to our senses in infinite extension, and to our souls in infinite thoughts—

• 1 “Weltordnung.”—“Ordre moral de l’univers.”

we who honour and adore a visible God in Nature, and perceive His invisible voice in our own spirit—we are painfully repulsed by the coarse words with which Fichte declares, even ironically, that God is a mere cobweb of the brain. It is indeed doubtful whether Fichte is inspired by irony or mere madness when he disengages our dear God so absolutely from all material attributes, that he even denies his existence because existence is an idea of the senses, and only possible as such. The doctrine of science, he declares, knows no other existence save the *sensible*; and as a being can only be ascribed to subjects of experience, this predicate cannot be affirmed of God. Therefore the Fichtean God has no existence; he is not; he manifests himself only as pure action, as an order of events, as *ordo ordinans*, as the world or universal law.

In this wise Idealism filtered the Godhead so long through all possible abstractions, till at last nothing of it remained. From this time forth, as with you in place of a king, so with us as regards God, Law alone ruled supreme.

But which is the most absurd, a *loi athée*, a law which has no God, or a *dieu loi*, a God who is only a law?

The Idealism of Fichte is one of the most colossal errors which the mind of man ever

hatched out. It is more godless and damnable than the coarsest Materialism. What is here called in France the atheism of the Materialists would be, as I could easily prove, always something morally edifying, something of trusting piety in comparison to the results of the Fichtean Transcendental-Idealism. Thus much I know, that both are detestable to me. Both views are anti-poetic. The French Materialists have written as much bad poetry as the German Transcendental-Idealists. But Fichte's doctrines were never dangerous to the state, and still less did they deserve to be persecuted as politically dangerous. To be misled by this erroneous doctrine a man needs to be gifted with a speculative keenness of intelligence such as is seldom found. This theory of errors was utterly inaccessible to the great mob with its thousands of thick heads. The Fichtean view of God should have been controverted rationally, and not by the police. To be accused of atheism in philosophy was something, too, so strange in Germany, that Fichte at first did not really know what they wanted of him. He remarked very rightly, that the question whether a philosophy was atheistic or not sounded to a philosopher as strangely as if one had asked a mathematician whether a triangle was green or red.

This accusation had, therefore, its secret grounds,

and these Fichte soon found out. As he was the most honourable man in the world, we may give full credence to a letter in which he addresses Reinhold as to these concealed causes, and as this letter, dated May 22, 1799, sketches the whole time and the whole dire distress of the man, we will cite something from it.

“Weariness and disgust determine me, as I had declared to thee I would do, to vanish from sight for some years. I was, according to the views which I held, convinced that duty demanded this conclusion, since I can never be heard in the present fermentation, while it would only be made worse; whereas, after a few years, when the first antipathy shall be appeased, I can speak with all the greater energy. To-day I think differently. I dare not be silent now; should I do so, I would never be able to speak again. Since the alliance of Russia with Austria, I have long regarded as probable what is now become certain since the late events, and especially since the horrible murder of the ambassadors (over which people are rejoicing here, and regarding which S. and G. cry out, “Quite right! these dogs should be killed”).¹ And this is that in future despotism will defend itself with desperation; that it will attain its aims by Paul and Pitt; that the basis of its plans is to

¹ In the French version “ambassadeurs français,” and in place of “S. and G.,” “Schiller et Goethe.”

destroy freedom of thought, and that the Germans will not hinder the execution of them.

“Do not imagine, for example, that the Court of Weimar believes that attendance at the University will be lessened by my presence; they know the contrary all too well. It was obliged to drive me away in consequence of a general plan vigorously carried out by Saxony. Burscher of Leipzig, who is initiated into these secrets, laid so far back as the end of last year a considerable wager that I would be expelled before the beginning of this twelvemonth. Voigt was long since won over by Burgsdorff to take part against me; and it has been made known in the Department of Science (*Department der Wissenschaften*) in Dresden that no one who is devoted to the newer philosophy can be promoted, or, if he has already a place, can be advanced. In the free school of Leipzig, even the expoundings of Rosenmüller are regarded with distrust. Luther’s Catechism has been again introduced there, and the teachers are once more confirmed in the symbolic books; and it will go on and spread. . . . In short, nothing is more certain than the most certain, which is, that if the French do not conquer the most overwhelming supremacy and achieve a change in Germany, or in a great portion of it, within a few years, no man who is known to have ever had a free thought will be allowed a place wherein to rest. It is,

therefore, to me more than most certain that, if I do find a small corner, I shall be hunted out of it in one or, at most, two years; and it is dangerous to let oneself be chased about to several places, as is shown historically by Rousseau's example.

"But suppose that I keep silence, and do not write the least thing; will I be left in peace under such conditions? I do not believe it; and suppose that I could hope it from royal courts, will not the clergy wherever I go excite the mob against me to stone me, and then beg their Governments to banish me as one dangerous to the public peace? And should I therefore be silent? No, I ought and will not, for I have cause to believe that if anything can be saved of the German spirit, it will be done by my words, and that by my silence philosophy will prematurely perish. I have no confidence that those who will not let me rest in silence will allow me to speak.

"But I will convince them of the harmlessness of my doctrine! Dear Reinhold, how can you suppose that these men will be kind to me? The brighter I become, the more innocent I appear, the blacker are they, and so much the greater will be my real offence. I have never believed that they are persecuting my alleged atheism. What they are hunting down in me is a free-thinker who begins to make himself intelligible (Kant's

good luck lay in his obscurity), and a decried democrat. What frightens them like a phantom is the independence which, as they dimly foresee, my philosophy awakens."

I again remark that this letter is not of yesterday, but bears the date of May 22, 1799. The political relations of those times have a disquieting likeness to recent events in Germany, with the difference that then the sense of freedom flourished more among scholars, poets, and other literati, but at present shows itself much less with them, and far more among the great active masses, as of daily labourers and tradesmen. While during the time of the first Revolution a leaden, utterly German drowsiness oppressed the people and ruled like brutal repose in the German land, the wildest fermentation and up-boiling showed itself in the world of letters. The loneliest author who lived in some remotest nook of Germany took part in this movement, almost sympathetically. Without being accurately informed of passing political events, he felt their meaning and expressed it in his writing. This fact reminds me of the large sea-shells which we sometimes place as ornaments on chimney-pieces, and which, however far they may be from the ocean, begin to murmur whenever the tide rises and the waves beat up against the shore. When the Revolution stormed wildly here in

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Paris in the great human sea, when it raged and roared, the German hearts beyond the Rhine responded to the tumult. But they were so isolated, among mere soulless porcelain teacups and Chinese gods,¹ which mechanically nodded with their heads as if they knew what the matter was. Ah! our poor predecessors in Germany had to atone bitterly for that sympathy with the Revolution. Aristocrats and priests played them their coarsest and vilest tricks. Some of them fled to Paris, where they passed down and away into poverty and misery. I saw not long ago a blind fellow-countryman, who has been ever since those days in Paris. I saw him in the Palais Royal, where he had come to warm himself a while in the sunshine. It was sad to see how pale and thin he was, feeling his way sadly along from house to house. They told me it was the old Danish poet Heiberg.² And I have seen the garret in which Citizen George Forster died. A far more cruel fate would have befallen the friends of freedom who remained in Germany had not

¹ Heine has *pagodas*, which he seems to have confused with josses, or deities with moving heads.

² Peter Andreas Heiberg, born in 1758 in Denmark, and father of the well-known dramatist, having been banished for political writing, went to Paris, where he was appointed by Napoleon I. to a place in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in which he died in 1830. He wrote, in addition to many comedies, a *Precis Historique de la Monarchie Danoise*, Paris, 1820.—*Note by the German Publisher.*

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Napoleon and his French conquered us. Napoleon certainly never suspected that he had been the saviour of *Idéologie*.¹ But for him, our philosophers with their ideas would have been extirpated by the gallows and the wheel. Yet the German Liberals, too republican to court Napoleon, and too magnanimous to ally themselves to a foreign rule, wrapped themselves in deep silence. They went sadly about with broken hearts and closed lips. When Napoleon fell, they smiled, but sadly, and were silent; they took little part in the popular enthusiasm, which by permission of the higher authorities burst out in Germany. They knew what they knew, and were silent. As these republicans led very chaste and frugal lives, they generally lived to an advanced age, and when the Revolution of July took place, many of them were still alive. Then we wondered not a little when the old odd fellows, whom we had seen straying about so bent up and bashful, all at once held up their heads, smiled gaily at us younger folk, pressed our hands, and began to tell merry tales. I even heard one of them sing, and it was the Marseillaise Hymn, in a coffee-house. Before long we had learned the melody and the beautiful words even better than the old man him-

¹ A favourite term with Napoleon I. Thus Carlyle tells us that he pinched the ear of Professor Teufelsdröckh, and called, or dismissed, him as *an idéologue*.—*Translator*.

self, for he often laughed like a fool in the best strophes or wept like a child. It is always well when such greyheads remain to teach us young ones the old songs. We will not forget them, and some of us will teach them to our grandsons, as yet unborn, but many of us will ere then have perished in German prisons or in garrets in exile.

Let us speak again of philosophy! I have shown how that of Fichte, constructed with the most refined abstraction, still manifests an iron-like inflexibility in its deductions, which rise to the boldest heights. But all at once, one fine morning, we find in it a great change. It begins to be flowery and make queer faces,¹ and becomes tender and modest. The ideal Titan who climbed the ladder of thought to heaven, and who with bold hand felt his way to its vacant chambers, has become bowed and Christian-like, and one who sighs much of love. This is Fichte's second period, which little concerns us. His whole system now undergoes the strangest transformation. At this time he wrote a book which has been recently translated into French, *Die Bestimmung des Menschen* — "The Destiny of Man."² A similar work, *Anwei-*

¹ "Das fangt an zu blumeln und flennen." In the French version, "elle commence à s'amollir, à devenir douceuse et modeste."

² Heine here quite misrepresents and detracts from the character of this remarkable work, which he had possibly never read. Many regard it as the most characteristic production of its author. It is also remarkable that Heine, with all his fervent

sung zum seligen Leben—"Directions for a Happy Life"—belongs to the same period.

Fichte, an obstinate man, as is evident enough, never admitted this grand transformation. He declared that his philosophy was still the same, that his expressions were changed and improved, and that he was misunderstood. He also declared that the *Natur-philosophie*, which rose at that time in Germany, and was beginning to supplant Idealism, was fundamentally his own system, and that his pupil Joseph Schelling, who left him and introduced this philosophy, had only returned his own phrases and enlarged his own old theory by unedifying flat additions.

We come here to a new phase of German thought. We mentioned the names of Joseph Schelling and *Natur-philosophie*,¹ and as the first is here quite unknown, and the expression *Natur-philosophie* or *philosophie de la Nature* is not generally understood, I must explain the meaning of both. Certainly I cannot exhaust the subject in these pages, and we will dedicate another work to the subject. All that we will do here will be to indicate a few urgent errors, and call a little

regard for piety, seems to regard any yielding to it as very shameful.—*Translator*.

¹ "Natural philosophy" does not translate this word, which corresponds to what is called "science" in English. On the other hand, *Wissenschaft* does not mean merely "science," but any accurate knowledge whatever.—*Translator*.

attention to the social importance of the philosophy in question.

And firstly, I would observe that Fichte was not far wrong when he declared that Joseph Schelling's system was really the same as his own, but otherwise formulised and augmented; for Fichte taught, as Schelling did: There is only one being, the *I*, the Absolute; and there is an identity of the ideal and real. Fichte, in the "Doctrine of Science," attempted to intellectually construct the real from the ideal; but Joseph Schelling reversed the process; he endeavoured to construct the ideal from the real. To express myself more clearly, Fichte, proceeding from the assumption that thought and nature are one and the same, arrived by intellectual action to the world of phenomena, creating Nature from thought and the real from the ideal. With Schelling, on the contrary, while he departs from the same beginning, the world of phenomena, or what is perceived by us, becomes pure ideas; Nature becomes thought and the real the ideal. Both these tendencies of Fichte and of Schelling mutually develop one the other to a certain degree. For according to the principle above proposed, philosophy can receive two divisions, in one of which it may be shown how Nature becomes manifest from the idea, and in the other how Nature resolves itself into pure ideas. Philosophy could therefore be divided into Transcen-

dental Idealism and Nature-philosophy. Schelling really recognised these two directions, and he pursued the latter in his *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur*—"Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature"—and the former in his *System des Transcendentalen Idealismus*—"The System of Transcendental Idealism."¹

These works, of which one appeared in 1797 and the other in 1800, are here mentioned because this mutually developing tendency is shown even in their titles, and not because they contain a complete system. Nor is there one in any of Schelling's works. There is not with him, as with Kant and Fichte, a chief work which can be regarded as the central point of his philosophy.²

¹ These works, and many more of the same kind from all countries, were translated into French, and extensively read in the "Forties." This was due to the influence of Cousin, the Eclectic, who urged the necessity of studying and comparing all philosophies. He did much good thereby, but Heine never lost an opportunity to ridicule him. And it may be remarked as a singular thing, that Heine never once alludes to the real and direct, and in fact almost the only, benefit which resulted from the study of metaphysics. This was the training, exercising, and disciplining the mind, so as to cause men to think more vigorously and intelligently on all subjects, be they literary, scientific, or practical. While they teach no scientific truths or useful facts, the works of Kant or Fichte are of great value as mental gymnastics; but this is seldom noted.—*Translator*.

² The "System of Transcendental Idealism" is, however, generally regarded as setting forth in the main, and to all practical intents and purposes, the philosophy of Schelling.—*Translator*.

It would be unjust to judge Schelling by the contents of a book and by the letter. One should rather read his books chronologically, following the gradual development of his thoughts in them, and then firmly grasp his leading idea. It also seems to me necessary that one shall with him not unfrequently decide where thought ceases and poetry begins; for Schelling is one of those creations to whom Nature has given more inclination to poetry than poetic power, and who, incapable of satisfying the daughters of Parnassus, have taken refuge in the forests of philosophy, and there carry on with abstract Hamadryads the most barren nuptials. Their feelings are poetic, but the instrument, the word, is weak; they seek and strive in vain for form of art in which they may clothe their thoughts and knowledge. Poetry is Schelling's weakness and his force. By it he is distinguished from Fichte, both to his advantage and disadvantage. Fichte is only a philosopher, and his power lies in dialectics and his strength in demonstration. But this is the weak side of Schelling; he lives more in contemplation; he does not find himself at home on the cold and lofty peaks of logic; he gladly flies into the flowery vales of symbolism, and his philosophic strength lies in construction. But this last is a mental power which may be found as often among mediocre poets as in great philosophers.

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According to this last declaration, it will be understood that Schelling, in that part of philosophy which is purely transcendental idealism, is only a follower of Fichte, and such must remain; but that in the philosophy of Nature, where he carried on his business and housekeeping among flowers and stars, he blooms and shines marvelously. This tendency has been pursued not only by him, but specially by his sympathetic friends, and the vehemence with which this manifested itself was also a poetaster-reaction against the previous abstract mental philosophy. Like school-boys set free who have sighed all day long in stuffy rooms under the burden of grammar-work and ciphering, they swarmed and stormed away and out into Nature, into the perfumed, sunlit real, and shouted for joy, and threw somersaults, and made a jolly row!

The expression "scholars of Schelling" should nowhere be taken in its exact literal signification. Schelling himself has said that he would only form a school in the fashion of the old poets, or a poetic academy, where no one is bound to any special theory, by any special discipline, but where every one obeys the spirit, and reveals it after his own manner. He might also have said that he founded a school of prophets where the inspired began to prophesy according to freak or fancy, and in any language which they liked. And

what the spirit of the master inspired, the youths carried out; the narrowest minds began to prophesy, every one in an unknown tongue, and the result was a great Pentecost in philosophy.

How the deepest meaning and most glorious conceptions may be applied to mumming masquerading, and how a mob of mean knaves and sad jack-puddings are capable of compromising a great idea, may be seen illustrated appropriately by the philosophy of Nature.¹ But the ridicule which the prophetic or poetic school of Schelling attracted to it was not deserved, for the idea of the philosophy of Nature is in reality nothing but the idea of Spinoza or Pantheism.

The doctrine of Spinoza and the philosophy of Nature, as Schelling set them forth in his better days, are essentially one and the same. The Germans, after they had rejected the Materialism of Locke and carried out the Idealism of Leibnitz to its utmost limits, and found it as fruitless, came at last to the third son of Descartes, or Spinoza. Philosophy had now run anew a great

¹ It is also quite as admirably illustrated by Heine's own bitter remarks on it, which give an extremely distorted and exaggerated, if not altogether false, view of the school of Schelling, with its disciples. Here, as in unfortunately too many instances, our author's tendency to sarcasm and ridicule, makes him dwell altogether on trifling defects, and gives us no idea of the real intellectual results of this philosophy and school.—*Translator*.

course, and one may say it found itself just where it was two thousand years before in Greece. But by close comparison of these two cycles a great difference manifests itself. The Greeks had as bold sceptics as we; the Eclectics denied the reality of the external world as decidedly as did our later Transcendental-Idealists, and Plato found as well as Schelling the world of spirit in that of phenomena. But we have an advantage over the Greeks as well as over the schools following Descartes, and that is, we began our philosophical cycle by testing the sources of human knowledge with the "Critique of Pure Reason" by Immanuel Kant.

As regards Kant, I may add to my previous remarks that the only proof of the existence of God which he allowed to remain—that is, the so-called moral proof—was destroyed by Schelling with great *éclat*. But I have already remarked that this proof was of no great strength, and that Kant probably allowed it to remain out of good-nature. The God of Schelling is the God-universe of Spinoza. At least he was that in the year 1801, in the second volume of the *Journal of Speculative Physics*. Here God is the absolute Identity of Nature and of thought, of material and of mind, and this absolute identity is not the cause of the universe, but is also the universe itself; it is consequently the God-universe. In this, in him, there are no opposing elements or divisions.

The absolute Identity is also the absolute Totality. A year later Schelling developed his God still more in a paper entitled "Bruno, or of the Divine and Natural Principle of Things." This title recalls the noblest martyr of our doctrine,¹ Giordano Bruno of Nola, of glorious remembrance. The Italians declare that Schelling took his best thoughts from the ancient Bruno, and accuse him of plagiarism. They are wrong, for in philosophy there can be no plagiarism. At last, in 1804, the God of Schelling appeared completely finished in an article entitled "Philosophy and Religion." Here we find the doctrine of the Absolute in perfection, and in it the Absolute is expressed in three formulas. The first is the categorical. The Absolute is neither the ideal nor the real, neither spirit nor matter, but it is the identity of both. The second formula is the hypothetical. When a subject and an object are present, the Absolute is the essential equality of both. The third formula is the disjunctive. There is only *one* being, but this can at the same time, or alternatively, be regarded as entirely ideal or as altogether real. The first formula is quite negative, the second supposes a condition which is harder

¹ This "our" is here interesting. Heine has throughout claimed to be a theist, but has carefully insisted that Kant utterly destroyed every argument in favour of a God, and now proclaims himself a pantheist. *Non nobis, &c.*—*Translator.*

to understand than the proposition itself, and the third is altogether that of Spinoza. "The absolute substance is recognisable either as thought or extension." Schelling, therefore, could advance no further on the road of philosophy than Spinoza, since the Absolute can only be understood under the form of these two attributes, thought and extension. But Schelling here abandons the path of philosophy and seeks to arrive at the perception of the Absolute by a kind of mystical intuition; he tries to penetrate to its central point, to its inmost being, where there is neither anything ideal or real, neither thought nor extension, neither subject nor object, neither spirit nor matter, but—well, I really do not know what.

Here the philosophy of Schelling comes to an end, and his poetry, or rather folly, begins. But it is here that he meets with most sympathy from a multitude of silly fellows, whom it suits admirably to give up calm thought and imitate those whirling dervishes who, as our friend Jules David relates, spin round in a circle till both the subjective and objective world vanish and blend in a blank nothing, which is neither real nor ideal; till they see the invisible, hear the inaudible, or till they hear colours and see tones, and conceive the Absolute.

I believe that the philosophic career of Schelling ends with this attempt to intellectually perceive

the Absolute. A greater thinker now comes before us, who has developed the philosophy of Nature to a perfected system, explained by its synthesis the whole world of phenomena, enlarged the great ideas of his predecessors by still greater, carried them through every form of discipline, and has therefore given them a scientific foundation. He is a pupil of Schelling, but a pupil who gradually usurped in the realm of philosophy all the might of his master, and, ambitious of rule, outgrew and finally cast him into darkness. This is the great Hegel, the greatest philosopher whom Germany has produced since Leibnitz. There can be no doubt that he far surpasses Kant and Fichte. He is as acute as the one and as strong as the other, and has, withal, a calm power of construction, a harmony of thought, such as we do not find in Kant and Fichte, because in them a mere revolutionary spirit prevails. Nor is it possible to compare this man with Joseph Schelling, for Hegel was a man of character, and if he did, like Schelling, give the constituted authorities in Church and State certain too significant justifications, it was at least done for a State which, theoretically at least, advocates the principle of progress, and for a Church which regards that of free examination as its vital element. This he did not conceal; he freely avowed his views; but Schelling winds his way

worm-like into the ante-chamber of a practical as well as theoretical Absolutism, and he lends a helping hand in the Jesuit cave where chains for the mind are forged ; and with all that will impose it on us that he is, all unchanged, the same Child of Light which he always was ; he denies his denial, and to the infamy of the renegade he adds the cowardice of the liar.

We cannot conceal it, neither from reverence or prudence. We will not be silent ; we say that the person who once most boldly preached in Germany the religion of Pantheism ; who proclaimed most boldly the sanctification of Nature and the rehabilitation of man in his divine rights —this teacher became an apostate to his own doctrine ; he left the altar which he had himself consecrated ; he has slunk back into the stall of the faith of the past ; he is now a good Catholic, and preaches an extra-mundane personal God, “who had the folly to create a world.” Let the old believers ring away with their bells, and sing *Kyrie eleison* over such a conversion ! It proves nothing for their doctrine ; it only proves that man turns to Catholicism ¹ when he is weary and old, when he has lost his physical and mental strength, and can no longer think and enjoy. So many free-

¹ Instead of “Catholicism,” the French version has “que l’homme tourne à la *religion* quand il est vieux et fatigué,”—quite as Heme himself did

thinkers have been converted on their death-beds—but do not boast of it! These tales of conversions belong at best to pathology, and give but indifferent witness for your cause. They only prove, after all, that it was not possible to convert those free-thinkers while they wandered with sound minds under God's free heaven and were as yet in full possession of their intellects.¹

I believe that Ballanche says that it is a natural law that initiators must die as soon as the work of initiation is completed. Ah! my good Ballanche, that is only half-true, and I would sooner assert that when the work of initiation is at an end the initiator dies or—becomes a renegade. And so it may be that we can somewhat soften the severe judgment which intellectual Germany has passed on Schelling; we may convert into calm pity the severe and strong contempt which lies heavy on him, and explain his apostasy from his own doctrine as a consequence of that law of Nature that he who exhausted all his forces on the expression or execution of a thought must, after he has spoken or acted it out, sink exhausted, either into the arms of death or those of his former foes.

By such explanation we may understand even more startling phenomena of the time which deeply

¹ According to a mediæval Latin adage thus Englished:—

“The devil fell ill, the devil a monk would be,

The devil got well, and the devil a monk was he”

disturb us. Through it we may comprehend why men who have sacrificed everything, and battled and suffered for their opinions, even after victory have abandoned their principles and gone over to the enemy. After this declaration I may call attention to the fact that not only Joseph Schelling, but to a certain degree also Fichte and Kant, have been guilty of apostasy. Fichte died betimes, ere his falling off from his own philosophy became too startling, and Kant was also untrue to the "Critique of Pure Reason," since he wrote the "Critique of Practical Reason." The initiator dies or renegades.

I know not how it comes, but this last sentence acts upon my soul so subduingly that I am not just now in the mood to utter certain other harsh truths regarding Schelling. Let us rather praise the Schelling of by-gone days, whose memory blooms for ever in the annals of German thought; for the former Schelling represents, as did Kant and Fichte, one of the great phases of our philosophical revolution, which I have in these pages compared to the political Revolution of France. In fact, if one can find in Kant the terrorist Convention, and in Fichte the newer Empire of Napoleon, we may see in Schelling the restoring reaction which followed it. But it was above all, a Restoration in a better sense, for Schelling restored to Nature its legitimate rights;

he strove to reconcile Spirit and Nature; he would unite both in the eternal World-Soul. He restored that great philosophy of Nature which we find among the old Greek philosophers, which was first led by Socrates, more into investigating the human soul itself, and which afterwards ran into the Ideal.¹ He restored that great philosophy of Nature, which, secretly sprouting from the ancient pantheistic religion of Germany, promised in Paracelsus the most beautiful flowers, but which was crushed by the advent of Cartesianism. And—more's the pity!—he at last restored things in which he may be compared in evil sense to the French Revolution. But then public reason would no longer endure him, and he was shamefully cast down from the throne of thought. Hegel, his majordomo, took the crown from his head, and it was shorn, and the deposed Schelling lives since then like a monkling in a city which shows its Popish-parson character in its name, and is called in Latin *Monacho-Monachorum*.² There I saw him wandering about ghost-like, with his great pale

¹ In the French version, "Il restaura cette grande philosophie de la nature que nous trouvons déjà chez les anciens philosophes grecs avant Socrate."

² Munich. Its coat of arms represents a monk bearing a book—probably the *Decretals*. Schelling subsequently went to Berlin.—*Translator*.

eyes and his down-cast apathetic¹ face, a pitiful picture of fallen glory. Hegel let himself be crowned, and—more's the pity!—also oiled a little in Berlin, and since then has reigned in the land of German philosophy.

Our philosophical revolution is ended. Hegel completes the grand cyclus. We have seen since then only the development and perfecting of the doctrine of the philosophy of Nature. This has, as I said, penetrated into all learning and science, and has produced the most extraordinary and grandest results; and, as I have indicated, much that was not pleasant has also to come to light. These facts—or failures—are so numerous that it would require a book to recount them; and this is the really interesting and most highly coloured part of our history of philosophy. And yet I am convinced that it will be better for the French to know nothing about it all, for such information could only tend to bewilder the heads of the French. Many passages of the philosophy of Nature torn from their connection might do you much harm.² This much

¹ “Mit seinem abgestumpften Gesichte.” *Abgestumpftheit*, apathy, dulness, bluntedness, from *stumpf*, a stump, a snubbed or short end. Heine hints here at the snub-nose and peculiar physiognomy of Schelling. One writer declares that he was a perfect facsimile of Socrates; an American friend of mine who attended his lectures insisted that the great philosopher looked exactly like a frog.—*Translator*.

² The danger here was not, however, that the heads of the French would be bewildered, as that Heine's own would have

I know, that had you been familiar four years ago (in 1830) with the German philosophy of Nature, you would never have had the Revolution of July. There was needed for such a deed such a concentration of thought and power, such a noble partiality, a certain virtue, and a certain degree of recklessness, such as only your old school allows. Philosophical perversities which might be employed to plead for Legitimacy and the Catholic doctrine of the Incarnation would have chilled your inspiration and checked your courage. I regard it, therefore, as important for the history of the world that your great Eclectic, who then wished to teach you German philosophy, did not understand it in the least. His providential ignorance was salutary for France and for all mankind.¹

Alas! the philosophy of Nature, which brought forth such glorious fruit in many regions of science, especially in the strictly natural sciences,

been sadly turned by such a task. Natural philosophy or physics was certainly not his *forte*. But the excuse is exquisitely Heine-like. "Ladies and gentlemen, I would gladly explain for you the problems of science, but I really fear they would be too much for your weak minds. *Passons!* the band will now play the *Marseillaise!*"—*Translator*.

¹ This is in allusion to Victor Cousin, whom Heine never missed an opportunity to ridicule. In the French version this is quite changed, not to give offence to the French, and reads as follows. "Je regarde donc comme un fait très-important dans l'histoire du monde, que certains *missionnaires allemands* qui vinrent alors à Paris pour vous enseigner la philosophie allemande, n'en aient compris le premier mot."—*Translator*. •

produced in others only the most noxious weeds. While Oken, the most genial thinker and one of the great citizens of Germany, discovered his new "World of Ideas,"¹ and inspired our German youth for the first principles of humanity, for freedom and equality,—ah! at the same time Adam Muller was teaching the stall-feeding of nations like cattle, according to natural philosophical principles, and Gorres preached the obscurantism of the Middle Age according to the natural scientific view that the state is a tree, and that it should in its organic distribution also have a trunk, branches, and leaves, as is so admirably set forth in the hierarchy of the corporations of the Middle Ages. About this time Mr. Steffens proclaimed as philosophic law that the peasant class were distinguished from the noble in this, that the peasant was meant by Nature to work without enjoying himself, and the noble privileged to enjoy himself without working. Yes, a few months since, as I am told, an ignorant country squire in Westphalia, a jack-fool, I believe, with the name of Haxthausen,²

¹ In the French version, "découvrait de nouveaux mondes d'idées" "Like cattle," in the next sentence, occurs only in the French text.—*Translator*.

² "Ein Krantjunker in Westphalen, ein Hans Narr, ich glaube mit dem Zunamen Haxthausen." Haxthausen was indeed an aristocrat, but he was not an ignorant boor or *maître-sot*, or even a fool. His great work on Russia fully deserves to be ranked and read with that of Wallace, and it certainly indicates that the author was a man of the world and a scholar.—*Translator*.

published a work in which he petitions the royal Prussian Government to consider the parallelism and its results which philosophy proves in the whole organism of the world, and to draw the political lines closer; for as there are four elements, fire, air, water, and earth, so there are four analogous elements in society—the nobility, clergy, citizens, and peasants.

When such dire follies were seen to burgeon on the tree of philosophy and shoot into poisonous flowers, especially when it was observed that the German youth, lost in metaphysical abstractions, passed unnoticed the most urgent questions of the time, and became unfit for practical life, the patriots and friends of freedom felt a righteous indignation against philosophy, and many went so far as to give it a death-sentence as a vain, worthless beating the air.¹

We will not be so foolish as to seriously confute these malcontents. German philosophy is a serious affair, which concerns all mankind, and our remote descendants will alone be able to

¹ "Einige gingen so weit ihr als einer mussigen mitzlosen Luftfechtereie ganz den Stab zu brechen." In allusion to the old custom of breaking a stick when pronouncing a sentence of death. Alluding to Korte (*Sprichwörter der Deutschen*), this was established by Charles V., and meant death without hope of pardon or reprieve. Heine's French translator, not understanding the expression, gives it as "quelques uns ont été jusqu'à rompre avec elle!"—*Translator*.

judge whether we are to praise or blame for having first worked out our philosophy, and after that our revolution. It seems to me that such a methodical race as ours must begin with the Reformation, then busy ourselves with philosophy, and finally, after finishing with it, pass on to political revolution. I find this series of succession all in order. The heads which philosophy has used for reflection, the revolution may hereafter chop off as may suit its purposes; but philosophy could have no earthly use for heads which a preceding revolution had decapitated. Let not your hearts be disquieted, ye German republicans; your German revolution will be none the gentler and milder because the "Critique" of Kant, the Fichtean Transcendental-Idealism, and even the philosophy of Nature, preceded it. These doctrines have developed revolutionary forces which only await the day to break forth and fill the world with terror and astonishment. There will be Kantians forthcoming who in the new world to come will know nothing of reverence for aught, and who will ravage without mercy, and riot with sword and axe through the soil of all European life to dig out the last root of the past. There will be well-weaponed Fichteans on the ground, who in the fanaticism of the Will are not to be restrained by fear or self-advantage, for they live in the Spirit. They defy matter, like the early Christians, who

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were not to be influenced by bodily torture or worldly delights; nay, such Transcendental-Idealists would be in a social revolution more inflexible than those Christians, for they endured earthly martyrdom that they might thereby attain to heavenly bliss, while the Transcendental Idealist regards martyrdom itself as mere appearance, and is inaccessible in the citadel of his own thought. But the philosophers of Nature would be more terrible than all of these, should they practically engage in a German revolution, and identify themselves with the work of destruction. For if the hand of the Kantian strikes strongly and surely, it is because his heart is moved by no traditional regard or respect; if the Fichtean dares all dangers because for him they do not exist in reality,¹ and the philosopher of Nature will be terrible because he will appear in alliance with the primitive powers of Nature, able to evoke the demoniac energies of old Germanic Pantheism—doing which there will awake in him that battle-madness which we find among the ancient Teutonic races who fought neither to kill nor conquer, but for the very love of fighting itself. It is the fairest merit of Christianity that

¹ Heine here falls into the error, which he at one time pointed out, of believing that Fichte taught the absolute non-existence of things in relation to the Me, in which error he was fully equalled by Goethe, Disraeli, and all who have attempted to be funny at Fichte's expense.—*Translator*

it somewhat mitigated that brutal German *gaudium certaminis* or joy in battle, but it could not destroy it. And should that subduing talisman, the Cross, break, then will come crashing and roaring forth the wild madness of the old champions, the insane Berserker rage, of which Northern poets say and sing. That talisman is brittle, and the day will come when it will pitifully break.¹ The old stone gods will rise from long-forgotten ruin, and rub the dust of a thousand years from their eyes, and Thor, leaping to life with his giant hammer, will crush the Gothic cathedrals! But when those days shall come, and ye hear the stamping and ring of arms, guard ye well, ye neighbours' children, ye French, and put not forth your hands into what we are doing in Germany, for verily evil will come upon you for that. Beware lest ye blow the fire, and take good heed that ye do not quench it; ye can in so doing all too easily burn your fingers. And laugh not at my advice, the advice of a dreamer who warns you against Kantians, Fichteans, and philosophers of Nature, nor at the fantastist who awaits in the world of things to be seen that which has been before in the realm of shadows. Thought goes before the deed as lightning precedes thunder. German thunder is indeed

¹ This sentence is wanting in the French version. It appears to have been left by oversight in the original.—*Translator*.

German, and not in a hurry, and it comes rolling slowly onward; but come it will, and when ye hear it crash as naught ever crashed before in the whole history of the world, then know that *der deutsche Donner*, our German thunder, has at last hit the mark. At that sound the eagles will fall dead from on high, the lions in remotest deserts in Africa will draw in their tails and creep into their royal caves. There will be played in Germany a drama compared to which the French Revolution will be only an innocent idyl. Just now all is tolerably quiet, and if here and there some one behaves in a lively manner, do not believe for that that the great actors have as yet appeared on the stage. They are only the little dogs who run round in the amphitheatre, and bark and bite one another, before the hour begins when the great array of gladiators will enter, and war to the death or for life.

And the hour will come. As on the benches of an amphitheatre, the races will group round Germany to behold the great battle-play. I warn ye then, Frenchmen, keep very quiet, and for your lives do not applaud. We might easily misunderstand it, and in our rude manner teach you roughly to keep quiet; for if we long ago, when in our weary, worn, and servile state, were able to subdue you, we shall have still greater power to do so when in the haughty pride of youthful intoxication

of freedom.¹ You yourselves know what a man can do in such condition, and you are no longer in that state. And so beware! I mean you well, and so speak bitter truth. You have more to fear from Germany set free than from all the Holy Alliance with all the Croats and Cossacks. For, firstly, you are not much beloved in Germany, which is almost incomprehensible, for you are really very amiable, and while you were in Germany gave yourselves great trouble to please, at least the better and more beautiful half of our people; but then, if that half did love you, unfortunately it is the one which does not bear arms, and whose good-will would bring you little gain. What it is with which they really reproach you I could never really understand.² Once in a beer-cellar in Gottingen a young Old German declared that Germany should take revenge on the French, for Conradin von Hohenstaufen, whom they had beheaded at Naples. You have forgotten about that, long, long ago. But we forget nothing. You will

¹ "Wenn wir fruherhin . . . euch manchmal *ubervaltigen* konnten" in the original is judiciously changed in the French version to "si adis nous avons pu nous *mesurer* avec vous."—*Translator*.

² Twenty-two invasions of Germany, the last within the memory of thousands who were living when Heine wrote, accompanied by every excess of murder and ravage, was one of the causes of reproach which he, as he says, "could never really understand."—*Translator*.

find that when we shall desire to grapple with you, there will be no want of sound and solid reasons. In any case, I counsel you to be well on your guard. Let happen in Germany what may, whether the Prince Royal of Prussia¹ or Doctor Wirth be dictator, keep your armour on, remain quietly at your posts, weapon on arm. I have kindest feeling for you, and I was almost alarmed when I read lately that your Minister proposed to disarm France.

As, despite your present Romanticism, you are born classics, you know well Olympus. Among the naked gods and goddesses who there make merry over nectar and ambrosia, you may see one goddess who, though surrounded by such festivity and gaiety, ever wears a coat of mail and bears helmet on head and spear in hand.

It is the Goddess of Wisdom.

¹ In the first manuscript this is given as "the Prince of Kyritz."—*German Publisher*

LETTERS ON GERMANY.



LETTER I.

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You, Sir, not long ago, in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, apropos of a criticism against your Frankfort fellow-countrywoman Bettina Ammin, alluded with enthusiasm to the authoress of "Corinne," which was certainly sincere, since you attempted to show how far she surpassed the women-writers of to-day, that is, the *Mères d'église* and the *Mères des compagnons*. I do not share your opinions in this respect, which, however, I will not here controvert, and which I shall everywhere respect, where they do not contribute to spread in France erroneous views as to Germany, its affairs and representatives. It was only with these views that I twelve years ago opposed the work *De l'Allemagne* of Madame de Stael in one of my own, which bore the same title. To

this book I attached a series of letters, the first of which shall be dedicated to you.

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Yes, woman is a dangerous being. I can sing a song about that. Other people have had this bitter experience, and only yesterday a friend told me thereanent a terrible tale. He had met in the Church St. Méry a young German artist, who said to him mysteriously, "You have attacked Madame la Comtesse de — in a German article, and you are doomed to death should you do so again. *Elle a quatre hommes, qui ne demandent pas mieux que d'obéir à ses ordres.*" Is not that terrible? Does it not sound like a shudder-and-midnight piece by Anne Radcliffe? Is not this woman a kind of Tour-de-Nesle? She only needs nod, and four assassins spring out on you and give you a death-blow, if not physically, at least morally. But how did this lady gain this awful power? Is she so beautiful, so aristocratic, so virtuous, so full of talent that she should exercise such boundless influence on her slaves, and that these should so blindly obey her? No! she does not possess these gifts of nature or of fortune to any too great an extent. I will not say that she is ugly, for no woman is that; but I can with right and reason declare that if Helena of Troy *had* looked like this lady, the whole Trojan

war would never have been, the citadel of Troy would never have been burned, and Homer would never have sung the wrath of Pelides Achilles. Nor is she of such noble family, and the egg from which she crawled was not begotten by a god nor hatched out by a queen—that is, in birth she matches not with Helen, being simply sprung from a citizen shopman in Frankfort. Nor are her treasures so great as those which the Queen of Sparta had as dower when Paris, who the cithern sweetly played—pianos had not been invented then—took her away from home. On the contrary, the tradesmen of the lady sadly sigh; her dentist says she owes him for her teeth. Only as regards virtue can she be compared to the famous Madame Menelaus.

Yes, women *are* dangerous; but I must remark by the way that the beautiful in this respect are as nothing to the ugly ones; for the former are accustomed to have men run after them, but the latter run after the men, and thereby accumulate a mighty gang of retainers. This is especially the case in literature. And here I would observe that all the most prominent French women-writers of to-day are very pretty. There is George Sand, author of the *Essai sur le Développement du Dogme Catholique*, and Delphine Girardin, Madame Merlin, and Louis Collet, who all put to shame all the shabby witticisms as to the gracelessness of those daughters

of the Graces, the blue-stockings, and who, when we read their writings by night alone in bed, make us long to be able to personally testify our admiration and respect for their genius! How beautiful George Sand is, and how gentle even for those spiteful tabby cats who smooth her with one paw and scratch with the other, or even for the dogs who most furiously bay and bark at her; like the moon in her fulness and glory, she shines down on them! And the Princess Belgiojoso, this beauty who yearns for truth, any man may slander her unharmed; anybody may throw mud on a Madonna by Raffaele; she will not defend herself. And * Madame Merlin, of whom not only her enemies, but even her *friends* always speak well, she too, accustomed to respect and honour, hardly knows what the language of rudeness means, and when she hears it, stares in amazement. The beautiful Muse Delphine, when abused, grasps her lyre, and her anger is poured out in a burning, glowing stream of Alexandrines. Say anything insolent of Madame Collet, and she will catch up a kitchen-knife as if to stab you; but there is no real danger. But don't abuse the Countess —! That done, thou art a child of death, doomed and damned! Four masked ruffians leap out on thee; four *souteneurs littéraires*¹—that is the Tour-de-Nesle

¹ A terribly severe hit. A *souteneur* is a prostitute's bully.

—thou art stabbed, strangled, drowned; the next morning thy corpse will be found in the *Entre-filets* of *La Presse*.

I return to Madame de Stael, who was not beautiful, and who made much trouble for the great Emperor Napoleon. She did not limit herself to writing books against him, but sought to wreak vengeance by non-literary means. She was for a time the soul of diplomatic intrigues, which always anticipated the Emperor, and she well knew how to throw assassins at the throat of her foe, only that these were not *valets*, like the champions of the lady whom I have mentioned, but kings. Napoleon was conquered, and Madame de Stael entered Paris in triumph, with her book *De l'Allemagne* and several hundred thousand ducats which she also brought as a living illustration of her work.

Since that time the French have become Christians and Romanticists and Counts; all of which concerns me not, and a race has well the right to become as wearisome and lukewarm as it pleases, and all the more because it was once the most brilliant in soul and the most heroic which ever

the lowest and vilest of mankind, who lives by the earnings of a public woman, and in return intimidates or extorts money from her victims. It was such passages which earned for Heine among his enemies the *sobriquet* of the Pietro Aretino—the *flagellum principum*—of the nineteenth century.

fortified and battled here on earth. And still I am somewhat interested in this transformation, for when the French renounced Satan and all his glory, they also abandoned the Rhenish provinces, and I became by this a Prussian. Yes, humbly as the word sounds, I am it—I am a Prussian, by the power of conquest. Only by compulsion, when I could no longer endure it, did I succeed in breaking my ban, since which time I live as *Prussien libéré* here in Paris, where at once after my arrival it became one of my chief employments to make war on the prevailing book of Madame de Stael.

I did this in a series of articles which I soon published as a complete book under the title *De l'Allemagne*. I did not intend, by choosing this title, to enter into literary competition with the work of this distinguished lady. I am one of the chief admirers of her intellectual ability; she has genius, but unfortunately this genius has a sex, and—more's the pity!—it is a feminine one. It was my duty as a man to oppose that brilliant *cancan* or gossiping, which was the more dangerous because she in her revelations as to Germany brought forward a mass of matters which were unknown in France, and which fascinated many by the charm of novelty. I did not dwell on casual errors and falsifications; I confined myself to showing the French what was the real meaning of that Romantic school which was so exalted.

and praised by Madame de Stael. I showed that it consisted only of a handful of worms, which the Holy Fisherman at Rome knew very well how to use to bait souls withal. Since which time many Frenchmen have had their eyes opened in this respect, and even many good Christian souls have seen how much I was in the right to show in a German mirror the intriguing which is slinking and slipping about in France, and which now raises its shorn head more boldly than ever.

I also wished to give sound and true information as to German philosophy, and I believe that I have done it. I have candidly and frankly told the secret story out of school which was only known to the scholars in the highest class, and here in France people strutted and plumed themselves not a little even this revolution. I remember how Pierre Leroux¹ met me and frankly confessed that he had always believed that German philosophy was a kind of mystical fog, and the German philosophers a species of pious seers who only breathed in the fear of God. I have not, of course, been able to give the French any detailed description of our different systems; I loved them too well to bore them to such an extent, but I have betrayed to them the very last and deepest

¹ A very learned antiquarian and bibliographer, well known as author of several works on the Middle Age, &c —*Translator*.

thoughts which lie at the bottom of all these systems, and which are the very opposite of everything which we have ever regarded as religion. Philosophy has carried on against Christianity in Germany the same war which it once waged in the Greek world against the older mythology, and here again it won the victory. In theory the religion of to-day is also knocked on the head; it is killed as to the idea, and it leads only a mechanical life like a fly which has had its head cut off, yet does not seem to mind it, and goes flying about as contented as ever. How many centuries the great fly Catholicism may still have in its belly—to borrow a phrase from Cousin—I know not, but the question is not of it. It refers far more to our poor Protestantism, which, to drag out its existence, has made all concessions conceivable, and withal must die. It availed naught that it purified its God of all anthropomorphism, that by much phlebotomy it pumped all the sensual or sensible blood from his veins, and also filtered him down to a pure spirit consisting of nothing but love, justice, wisdom, and virtue; 'twas all in vain, and a German Porphyrius named Feuerbach (an English Fire-brook, in French *Fleuve-de-flamme*) mocks not a little this attribute of God, pure spirit, whose love deserves little laudation since he lacks human gall, and who cannot cost justice much, having no stomach,•

which must be fed *per fas et nefas* ; whose wisdom should not be rated too highly, since he never has a cold in the head to interfere with meditation, and cannot be un-virtuous, having no body. Yes, not only the Protestant Rationalists, but even the Deists are struck down in Germany since Philosophy brings all its catapults to bear on the idea of God, as I have shown in my book *De l'Allemagne*.

I have been blamed on many sides for tearing away the canopy from the German heaven, and showing to all that every deity of the old faith has vanished, and that now there only sits there one old virgin with leaden hands and sorrowing heart—Necessity. Ah ! I only said long ago what every one must suffer, and that which then sounded so strangely is now re-echoed from every roof you side the Rhine. And in what fanatic tones are the anti-religious sermons often preached ? We now have monks of atheism who would burn Voltaire alive for being an irreclaimable, hardened deist. I must confess this music does not please me, but neither does it alarm, for I stood behind the great *Maestro* while he composed it, certainly in very illegible and entangled characters, so that every one might not decipher it. I observed how he often looked round anxiously, as if in fear he might be understood. He loved me well, for he was very sure I would not betray him ; indeed, I sometimes thought him servile. Once when I was

out of patience over the saying, "All which is, is reasonable," he smiled strangely and remarked, "It might also be said that all which is reasonable must be." He looked about hurriedly, but was at once at ease, for only Henry Beer had heard the words. It was not till later that I understood such expressions. And so I also understood why he had declared in the "Philosophy of History" that Christianity was a progress because it had taught a God who died, while the heathen gods knew nothing of death. What a step forward it is, therefore, if God has never existed at all!

With the overthrow of the old doctrines of faith, that of ancient morality is involved. The Germans will long hold to the latter. It is with them as with certain ladies who were virtuous to their fortieth year, and then did not really think it worth their while to practise or begin delightful vices even though their morals had grown slack. The destruction of faith in heaven has not only a moral but a political power; the masses will bear no longer with Christian patience their earthly sufferings, and yearn for the blessings and joys of this life. Communism is a natural consequence of this changed view of the world, and it is spreading all over Germany. And it is also quite natural that the proletaries (radical agrarians), in their war against existing institutions, should have the most advanced intellects, the philosophers of the

great school as leaders. These go from doctrine to deed, to the last aim of all thought, and formulise the programme. How does it read? I dreamed it long ago and spoke it in these words, "We will be no sans-culottists, no frugal citizens, no cheap economical presidents; we found a democracy of equally lordly, equally holy, equally happy gods. You demand simple costumes, austere manners, and cheap unseasoned pleasures; we, on the contrary, demand nectar and ambrosia, purple garments, costly perfumes, luxury and splendour, dances of laughing nymphs, music and comedies. Be not angered, O virtuous republicans! To your censuring reproaches we reply what the fool in Shakespeare has already said, 'Dost thou think because thou art virtuous there shall be no more cakes and ale?'"

These words are in my book *De l'Allemagne*, in which I distinctly predicted that the political revolution of the Germans would proceed from that philosophy whose systems had been so often denied and depreciated as mere Scholasticism. It was easy prophesying. I also foresaw how the armoured and armed men would arise, who would fill the world with the crash of weapons—yes, and alas! fight fiercely among themselves.

Since that often-mentioned book has appeared, I have given the public no more on Germany. If I to-day break my long silence, it is less to

satisfy the longings of my own heart than the pressing entreaties of my friends. They have been many a time more than I indignant at the brilliant ignorance which prevails here as regards all German intellectual history, an ignorance which our enemies have exploited to great advantage. I say our enemies, not meaning thereby those pitiful beings who go peddling about from one editorial office to another, offering for sale coarse slanders, and take with them certain so-called patriots as *allumeurs*. Such men can in the long run do no harm; they are too stupid, and they will at last bring it so far as to cause the French to doubt whether we Germans really invented gunpowder. No; our really dangerous enemies are those familiars of the European aristocracy who glide after us in all disguises, even in women's garments, to murder our good reputation in the dark. The Men of Freedom, who fortunately escaped, in their native land, the dungeon or secret execution, or any of those little writs and warrants which make travelling so uncomfortable, would find no rest here in France, and those who cannot be injured in the body shall at least have their names daily cursed and crucified.

SECOND PART.



THE ROMANTIC SCHOOL.

PREFACE

BY THE GERMAN PUBLISHER.



A GREAT part of the present volume first appeared in French in 1833 in the *Europe Littéraire*, and was published in the same year in German with the title *Zur Geschichte der neueren schönen Literatur in Deutschland. Zwei Theile. Paris und Leipzig: Heideloff & Campe*. ["Contributions to the History of the Later Elegant Literature in Germany. Two Parts. Paris and Leipzig: Heideloff & Campe."] The first French edition of the book *De l'Allemagne*, Paris, Eugène Renduel, 1835, does not contain the later enlargements of the third book. These were, much amended, first added to the second German edition, which appeared in 1836, with the title of "The Romantic School." The new edition was needed in consequence of a decision of the Bund or Diet of July 3, 1832, by which almost unconquerable hindrances were put in the way to prevent works published abroad from circulating .

in the *Bundesstaaten*, or States of the Diet. Everything politically suspicious was struck out by the red pencil of the censor, and now, for the first time, are the many gaps or missing passages thus expunged restored, after most careful comparison with the still existing original manuscripts. [The German publisher adds to these remarks a list of these corrected readings, which it is needless to supply, as they are given in the text. He remarks that in the latest French edition the diatribe against Victor Cousin, and the severe allusion to him in the first volume of "Germany," are omitted. He also adds that a tolerably complete or perfect English translation of the first German edition of this work appeared in 1836 in Boston (James Munroe & Co.), under the title, "Letters Auxiliary to the History of Modern Polite Literature in Germany, by Heinrich Heine, translated from the German by G. W. Haven." The first translation of the *Reisebilder* into English, followed by the "Book of Songs," by Charles Godfrey Leland, appeared in America, in Philadelphia, in 1856. There was also published in Philadelphia an admirable translation of the "Florentine Nights" by Simon Stern.—*Translator.*]

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

ALTHOUGH these pages, which I wrote for the *Europe Littéraire*, a journal published here in Paris, form an introduction to other articles, I hasten to give them to the public of my native land, lest some other person should do me the honour of translation from French into German.

Certain passages are wanting in the *Europe Littéraire*, which I now print in full: the management of the publication required certain trifling omissions. In typographical errors the German compositor is not one whit behind his French brother. The book here thoroughly examined, which is by Madame de Stael, is called *De l'Allemagne*. And here I cannot refrain from correcting a remark with which the editor of *Europe Littéraire* accompanied these contributions. For he wrote that "to Catholic France German literature must be presented from a Protestant point

of view." I objected in vain that there was no Catholic France; that I did not write for a Catholic France; it was all-sufficient should I mention that I myself belonged in Germany to the Protestant Church. This mention, while it only expressed the fact that I have the pleasure to be paraded in a Lutheran Church book as an evangelical Christian, still left me free to express in books of learning or science any opinion, even if it contradicted the Protestant dogma—against which the editor's assertion that I wrote my essays from a Protestant point of view must lay dogmatic fetters on me. All in vain. The editor of *Europe* could not grasp subtle Tudesque distinctions, and they went for nothing. I mention this, partly lest I should be accused of inconsistency, partly too lest I incur the ridiculous suspicion of attaching any value to clerical-religious distinctions.

Since the French do not understand the language of our schools, I have in some expressions as to the existence of God used the same words as those with which they have been familiarised by the apostolic zeal of the Saint-Simonians, and as these phrases set forth my meaning quite nakedly and distinctly, I have preserved them in the German version. Aristocrats and priests, who have of late dreaded more than ever the power of my word, and have on that account sought to

depopularise¹ me, may distort and falsify those expressions, so as to make me appear guilty of Materialism, or even of atheism; they may make me out a Jew or a Saint-Simonian, they may accuse me of all conceivable heresies to their mob, but no cowardly retrospection shall ever lead *me* astray to disguise my views of divine things with common ambiguous phrases. And my friends too may blame because I do not more ingeniously disguise my thoughts, that I reveal without mercy the most delicate subjects; that I thereby irritate — But neither the ill-will of my foes nor the small cunning folly of my friends shall ever restrain me from expressing myself straightforwardly as to that weightiest question of mankind, the Being of God.

I do not belong to the Materialists who embody the spirit; I give, far more, the spirit back unto bodies. I spiritualise it again—I sanctify it.

I do not belong to the atheists who deny—I affirm.

The Indifferentists and so called clever folk, who will not express themselves plainly as to God, are the real deniers of him. Such tacit denial is now actually becoming a social offence, since through

¹ *Depopularisiren*, quite as *baroque* a word in German as in English.—*Translator*.

it false conceptions are made to do duty which hitherto have always served despotism as a support.

The beginning and end of all things is in God.

HEINRICH HEINE.

Written in Paris, the 2nd of April 1833.

II.

The Preface of the first part of this book may also justify the appearance of the second. That promised the history of the Romantic School in general; this specially offers accounts of its leaders. In third and fourth divisions I shall, in addition, discuss the other heroes of the Schlegel cycle of legends, then the magic poets of Goethe's time, and finally the authors of my own day.

But I earnestly beg the kind reader not to forget that these pages were written for the *Europe Littéraire*, and that the limits which that journal prescribed, for political reasons, must be also borne in mind.

As I personally attended to the correction of this book, I beg pardon for too many typo-

graphical errors. Even a casual glance at my advertisements indicates that there are many such oversights. Here I must, seriously indeed, point out that the Emperor Henry was not a descendant of Barbarossa, and that Mr. August Wilhelm Schlegel is a year younger than I have made him; and the year of Arnim's birth is incorrectly given. And if I have also asserted in these pages that the higher criticism in Germany never occupied itself with Hoffmann, so I, exceptionally, forgot to mention that Willibald Alexis, the poet of Cabanis, also wrote a "characteristic" of Hoffmann.

HEINRICH HEINE.

Paris, the 30th of June 1833

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.



THE most important portion of these pages, which were originally composed in French and addressed to the French people, have been placed before the public of my native land in a German version entitled *Zur Geschichte der neueren schönen Literatur in Deutschland*—"Contributions to a History of the Later Polite Literature in Germany." In the present enlarged form the book may deserve the new title *Die Romantische Schule*—"The Romantic School"—for I believe that it illustrates, in the most accurate manner, the chief points of the literary movement which that school developed.

It was my intention to also discuss the later periods of our literature in a similar form, but more pressing occupation and personal affairs prevented me from continuing the work. Moreover, the manner of treatment and the form of publication in my last mental efforts has been more and

more limited by circumstances. Therefore I have been obliged to publish my communications on the "History of Religion and Philosophy in Germany" as a second part of the *Salon*, and yet this work should really be the general introduction to German literature. I have already published in the daily press the details of a peculiar mischance which befell me in the second part of this *Salon*. My publisher, whom I accused of having, on his own authority, mutilated my book, has denied this accusation in the same journal, declaring the mutilation in question of the glorious work to be that of a jurisdiction above all censure.

I commend to the pity of the eternal gods the safety of my native land and the defenceless thoughts of its authors

HEINRICH HEINE.

Written in Paris in the Autumn of 1835.

BOOK THE FIRST.

MADAME DE STAEL'S work *De l'Allemagne* is the only comprehensive source of information which the French possess as to the intellectual life of Germany. And yet since this book appeared a long time has elapsed, and an entirely new literature has meanwhile developed itself in that country. Is this only a transitional literature? has it attained its height? is it already faded? As to which opinions differ. The majority opine that with the death of Goethe a new literary period began in Germany, that in him old Deutschland went down to its grave, the aristocratic age of literature came to its end, and the democratic began; or, as a French journalist recently expressed it, "Que la démocratie littéraire commence ou l'esprit des individus à cessé pour faire place à l'esprit de tous"—"The spirit of all has begun where that of single individuals ceased."

As for me, I cannot take it on myself to decide in so determined a manner as to the future evolutions of the German mind. I had, however, predicted for many years the end of the Goethean

Art-era (*Kunstperiode*), which name I first gave it. The prophesying was not difficult. Well did I know the ways and means of those malcontents who would fain put an end to the great Art-empire of Goethe; and it is said that I myself was seen figuring in the *emeutes* of those days against him. Now that he is dead, the recollection gives me bitter pain.

While I announce these pages as a continuation of Madame de Stael's *De l'Allemagne*, I must, while praising the knowledge which can be gathered from that book, still advise great caution in consulting it, and stamp it as the work of a coterie. Madame de Stael, of glorious memory, has here, in the form of a book, opened a *Salon* in which she received German writers and gave them opportunity to become known to the civilised world of France; but in all the babble of many and most varied voices which resound from this book, one always hears most distinctly the fine treble of August Wilhelm von Schlegel. Where she is all herself, wherever this woman, so gifted with feeling, expresses herself freely, with all her flaming heart and all the fireworks of her sky-rockets of wit, and sparkling extravagancies, there the book is good and admirable.¹

¹ In the French version, "Lorsqu'elle se livre à sa chaleur naturelle, quand elle abandonne à ses radieuses explosions tout

But as soon as she obeys the influences of others, whenever she pays homage to some school the spirit of which is to her strange and incomprehensible, or as soon as the laudation of this school calls for Ultramontane tendencies directly contradictory to her Protestant clear-headedness, then the book becomes pitiable and unpleasant. Add to this that besides her unconscious party-spirit, she exercises a very conscious one, because by praising the spiritual life and idealism in Germany she means blame of the realism of France and the material splendour of the Empire. Her book *De l'Allemagne* is in this respect like the *Germania* of Tacitus, who, perhaps, by his eulogy of the Germans meant indirect satire of his Roman fellow-countrymen.

When I before spoke of a school to which Madame de Stael was devoted, and whose tendency she aided, I meant that which is called the Romantic. It will be made clear in this work that this was very different in Germany from what is known by the same name in France, and that its tendency was quite other than that of the French Romanticists.

But what was the Romantic School in Germany?

It was nothing else but the reawakening of the

cette pyrotechnie sentimentale qu'elle dirige si bien, son livre est curieux et digne d'admiration."

poetry of the Middle Age, as it had shown itself in its songs, images, and architecture, in art and in life. But this poetry had risen from Christianity; it was a passion-flower which had sprung from the blood of Christ. I do not know whether the melancholy passion-flower of Germany is known by that name in France, and whether popular legend attributes to it the same mystical origin.

It is a strange unpleasantly coloured blossom, in whose calyx we see set forth the implements which were used in the crucifixion of Christ, such as the hammer, pincers, and nails—a flower which is not so much ugly as ghostly, whose sight even awakes in our soul a shuddering pleasure, like the convulsively agreeable sensations¹ which come from pain itself. From this view the flower was indeed the fittest symbol for Christianity itself, whose most thrilling chain was in the luxury of pain.²

¹ *Kramphast sussen Empfindungen*. In the French version *sensations douces*.—*Translator*.

² In the French version the sentences which follow are very much softened down, to suit a separate circle of less advanced readers, as follows :—

“ Il m’importe de faire remarquer qu’en disant Christianisme on ne parle ni d’une de ses églises ni d’un sacerdoce quelconque, mais bien de la religion en elle-même, de cette religion dont les premiers dogmes renferment une condamnation de tout ce qui est chair, de sorte que non seulement elle accorde à l’esprit une suprême puissance sur la chair, mais qu’elle voudrait encore détruire celle-ci pour glorifier l’autre sublime et divine dans son principe, mais, hélas ! trop désintéressée pour ce monde impar-

Though in France only Roman Catholicism is understood by the word Christianity, I must specially preface that I only speak of the latter. I speak of that religion in whose first dogmas there is a damnation of all flesh, and which not only allows the spirit power over the flesh, but will also kill this to glorify the spirit. I speak of that religion by whose unnatural requisitions sin and hypocrisy really came into the world, in this that by the condemnation of the flesh the most innocent sensual pleasures became sins, and because the impossibility of becoming altogether spiritual naturally created hypocrisy. I speak of that religion which by teaching the doctrine of the casting away of all earthly goods, and of dog-like-abject humility and angelic patience, became the most approved support of despotism. Men have found out the real life and meaning (*Wesen*) of this religion, and do not now content themselves with promises of supping in Paradise; they know that matter has also its merits, and is not all the

fait, une pareille religion devint le plus ferme soutien des despotes qui ont su exploiter à leur profit ce rejet absolu des biens terrestres, cette naïve humilité, cette béate patience, cette céleste résignation prêchée par les saints apôtres. Des prédicateurs moins bonaces, ont surgi depuis, et dans leurs paraboles terribles; ils démontrent les difficultés pratiques et les dangers sociaux des doctrines nazaréennes ils ne se laissent plus dégoûter du banquet de la vie par ces appels au ciel qu'on leur fait."

devil's, and they now defend the delights of this world, this beautiful garden of God, our inalienable inheritance. And therefore, because we have grasped so entirely all the consequences of that absolute spiritualism, we may believe that the Christian Catholic view of the world has reached its end. Every age is a sphinx, which casts itself into the abyss when man has guessed its riddle.

Yet we do in no wise deny the good results which this Christian Catholic view of the world established in Europe. It was necessary as a wholesome reaction against the cruelly colossal materialism which had developed itself in the Roman realm, and threatened to destroy all spiritual human power.¹ As the lascivious memoirs of the last century form the *pièces justificatives* of the French Revolution, as the terrorism of a *comité du salut public* seems to be necessary

¹ It is hardly worth while to indicate the inconsistencies of Heine, but it may be observed that these remarks are in direct contradiction to the Hellenism which he generally professes; the leading doctrine of which is, that the perfect culture of the body alone implies æsthetic perfection, which in turn involves true moral culture. Roman corruption was caused not by the preponderance of materialism, but by excessive importation of Oriental vice, which was surcharged with every form and phase of spiritualism and supernaturalism, as Heine himself has elsewhere shown. It was by abandoning its early "materialism" for spiritualism that Rome fell, so far as any moral cause can be assigned for its decay.—*Translator*.

